

WIN!
WELLIES AND
HORSECARE
GOODIES

JUMP TO SUCCESS HARRY MEADE'S TOP TIPS

THE MAGAZINE FOR EVERY RIDER

Horse

SEPTEMBER 2015 30 JULY – 27 AUGUST

BUILD A BOND

Develop two-way trust with your horse

EQUINE MOT

Easy checks to monitor his health

ON YOUR MARKS

How to improve your dressage scores

TRANSFORM A SPOOKY HORSE
with our brilliant exercises

REAL LIFE

"We couldn't give up on Dez"



ON TEST! CROSS-COUNTRY BOOTS REVIEWED

INNOVATION

GB

IN AIR TECHNOLOGY



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EQUESTRIAN

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Living life to the full:
read the story of Dez
'the lucky pony' on page 54



We all strive to develop a special relationship with our horses and ponies, and want to build a strong bond with them.

According to popular trainer Michael Peace, the secret is to create a 50:50 partnership, where human and equine are equals.

Get the balance right, and your horse should be more willing to work for you, and he will be happy to put his trust in you – and take confidence from you – in challenging situations.

To discover more about Michael's theory, and how to introduce it to your training, see page 16.

A good way of building a bond is spending more quality time with your horse. This will also give you a chance to learn what his normal behaviour is, and spot any signs of a problem sooner.

If you detect a health issue early on, you can take the right action and ensure the best outcome.

A good idea is to give your horse a regular, mini health check – to find out how, turn to page 76.

This month I was delighted to meet a very special youngster – Dez 'the lucky pony'. After following the story of this 'dumped to die' foal on Facebook, and the efforts taken to save his life, it was heartwarming to see him happy and healthy in a loving home. You'll find Dez's story starting on page 54.

If you've been following the search to find the Equilibrium Products Rising Star of the Year, it's now time to cast your vote. Turn to page 66 to remind yourself of the finalists and choose your favourite.

Jo Browne, Editor

Jo

RACING CERTAINTY

Galloping onto our cover this issue is Helen Buckman, who works at Durdans Livery Stables in Epsom, Surrey. Helen is riding Merlimont ('Ernie') who is owned by Nicky and Sam Di Mond.

Ernie, 11, won at Horse of the Year Show as a four-year-old and now enjoys unaffiliated eventing and dressage at Novice level.

Helen, who manages the yard, competes in affiliated eventing on her own horse, Bruvver.

In the photo she wears a Jersey Polo by Ariat. The top is priced £29.99 and is available in sizes XS-XL. It comes in colours pink clash, navy, eclipse and phyto green. Visit: www.ariat-europe.com.



Photograph: Lucy Merrell

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Horse September



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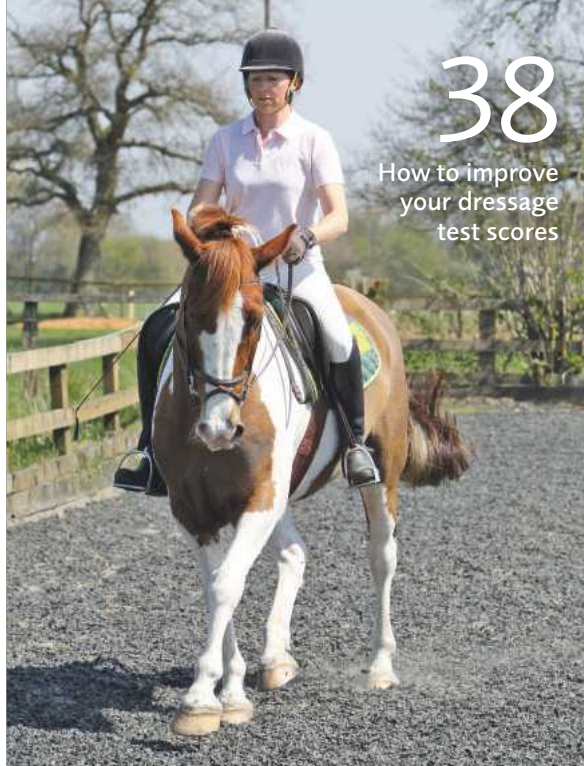
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NEWS

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● OLYMPIA HEADLINE DISPLAY ANNOUNCED ● TEAM GB QUAD REVEALED FOR EUROPEAN EVENTING CHAMPIONSHIPS ● VALEGRO T-SHIRTS ON SALE

Ensure horses have a healthy, happy journey

A set of guidelines has been produced to help owners prevent their horses becoming dehydrated while travelling in a lorry or trailer.

The sound advice has been compiled by equine experts, including World Horse Welfare, and is based on extensive research.

Studies show that transported horses can require as much as 100-litres of water each day – equivalent to one average dustbin-full.

While hot weather can increase the required amount of water, it is just as important in very cold temperatures.

The guidelines recommend horses should have access to water and forage at least every four-and-a-half hours while travelling.

The importance of unrestricted access to water and forage before and after a journey is also highlighted.

"It is not always easy to spot signs of dehydration, but the consequences can be devastating – from fatigue, loss of performance and abnormal behaviour to serious illnesses like colic and in the worst cases even death," said Roly Owers of World Horse Welfare.

"It is a key consideration for anyone involved in travelling horses, whether it's a quick trip to a local pleasure ride or a full-day journey to a four-star event."

The guidelines can be downloaded from www.worldhorsewelfare.org/guidance.

Photo: Jon Stroud

Make sure your horse is offered water regularly on long journeys

Show-stopping headliner for Olympia

Popular French horseman Jean-Francois Pignon has been announced as the headline display at the equestrian world's biggest Christmas party – Olympia, The London International Horse Show.

This year's extravaganza will take place from 15-21 December and Jean-Francois is set to wow the crowds as he works his team of horses at liberty.

"I'm so excited to be returning to the UK with my horses to showcase our skills for the crowd at Olympia," said Jean-Francois. "It is such a special show with a wonderful atmosphere and I can't wait to perform our latest routine."

Other attractions include the Household Cavalry Musical Ride, Shetland Pony Grand National, Kennel Club Dog Agility and festive finale.

As well as displays, Olympia offers top-class dressage, showjumping and carriage driving action. The world's top dressage riders will be in performing on 15 and 16 December. World Cup driving takes place on the 18 and 19 December.

Showjumping highlights are the World Cup on 20 December, and the Grand Prix on the final – Monday – night.

To purchase tickets for the show, visit: www.olympiahorsheshow.com, tel: 0871 230 5580.



Photo: Kit Houghton



Gemma Tattersall is making her senior team debut

European eventing squad announced

A squad of 12 riders will compete on home soil at this summer's European Eventing Championships, which are being held at Blair Castle, Scotland, from 10-13 September.

The squad includes five riders making their debut on a senior team – Dani Evans, Flora Harris, Holly Woodhead, Gemma Tattersall and Francis Whittington.

Four riders – William Fox-Pitt, Pippa Funnell, Oliver Townend and Nicola Wilson – have all competed at a 'home' Europeans, as they were on the team at Blenheim in 2005.

Kitty King, Laura Collett and Izzy Taylor will also be representing Team GBR at Blair.

Commenting on her selection, Gemma Tattersall, who rides Arctic Soul, said: "I am immensely happy to be selected and so proud for my support team, who have worked so hard to get me to this point over the years.

"I have been to Blair a few times and absolutely love it there. The cross-country is a bit old fashioned in that it's a real riders' course. It's the ultimate in eventing as it's a proper tough track which will sort the men from the boys!"

Francis Whittington revealed he had been waiting 20 years for a call up to ride on a senior championship team.

"It will undoubtedly be a strong course and there will be strong competition," he added.

Win training support from Sir Mark

Get a head start to achieving your eventing dreams by applying for a scholarship scheme backed by Sir Mark Todd.

Entries are being invited for the Mark Todd Bridging the Gap Scholarship, which will see one lucky rider win training and mentoring from the world-famous event rider.

They will also benefit from products from the Mark Todd Collection and Keyflow Feeds.

The scheme is open to riders that have attended at least one of the Mark Todd Bridging the Gap (MTBTG) ridden training

sessions that British Eventing are running throughout the 2015 season.

The initiative provides training opportunities for riders aiming to move into Advanced or two-star competition, or who are working towards a "more established" three-star level.

Entries close on 10 September (those attending MTBTG training on 23 September will be considered), with six riders being chosen to go forward to a final judging stage.

To find out more, visit the training section at www.britisheventing.com. Entries can be submitted via www.keyflowfeeds.com/mtbtg.

Valegro down to a T

Fans of Valegro can declare their love for the star dressage horse, thanks to a new range of eye-catching t-shirts.

The t-shirts feature the beautiful and unmistakable head of 'Blueberry' – as he's known at home – and are embellished with Swarovski crystals and pearls.

Based on a painting by Bridgette Smart, the tops come in pink, blue, cream and black and feature a gold medal logo.

They are available in children's sizes from age



Valegro gives the t-shirts his seal of approval

four to 13, priced £22.50, and adult sizes small, medium and large, priced £27.

For more details or to order, visit: www.classicdressage.com; tel: (01442) 834 536.

In brief

HEAVY HORSE SHOW MOVES TO NEW VENUE

The world's largest gathering of Shire horses will be held at a new venue in 2016.

The Shire Horse Society National Show will be held from 18-20 March, at Bingley Hall, Staffordshire County Showground.

The move is being made to cater for increasing visitor numbers, with more and more people keen to support the iconic breed, which a few decades ago was in danger of dying out.

The show is expected to attract more than 200 horses from across Europe.

To find out more about the event, visit: www.shire-horse.org.uk.



COUNTDOWN TO RIO IS UNDERWAY

An equestrian test event will mark the one-year countdown to the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio.

Riders from around the world, including Great Britain, will be taking part in a 'warm up' horse trials, due to start on 6 August.

The two-star competition will see riders competing on local horses.

The purpose is to allow riders to experience the climate and organisers to road test competition areas, stabling, and technical aspects like storing and timing.

PONY HOLIDAY FUN

An Essex horse sanctuary is running a series of pony days during the summer.

Remus Horse Sanctuary's Pony Days are suitable for children over the age of nine.

Youngsters can help make up feeds, and will be taught skills such as grooming and mucking out.

Adults don't have to miss out on the fun as there is one day set aside for more mature pony lovers!

The dates run every Wednesday until 9 September, with the adult pony day on 19 August. Each session costs £45. Visit: www.remussanctuary.org.



Enjoy pony fun this summer

What's on

1-2 AUGUST HANSLOPE ENDURANCE RIDE

To be held at Milford Leys Farm, Milton Keynes, Bucks, classes range from a 16km pleasure ride to a two-day 160km challenge. On the Saturday, young riders will be battling it out for the Under 21s National Championships, which will see competitors take on a 120km route. Visit: www.endurancecgb.co.uk.

7-9 AUGUST THE FESTIVAL OF BRITISH EVENTING

Taking place at Gatcombe Park, Glos, the home of the Princess Royal, this is a must for all equestrian fans. The event incorporates the British Open, Intermediate and Novice eventing championships. There is also an amateur championship plus a busy programme of family entertainment – and shopping opportunities. For full details, visit: www.gatcombe-horse.co.uk.



12-16 AUGUST EQUIFEST

Billed as a 'festival for horse lovers', Equifest is a five-day show offering horse and pony classes, non-stop entertainment and shopping. There is a packed programme of

events, with evening performances every day bar Sunday. It takes place at the East of England Showground, Peterborough, Cambs. Entry is free on Wednesday and Thursday. On other days, prices start at £7 for adults on the gate. Under 16s go free. Visit: www.equifest.org.

19 SEPTEMBER EQUINE BEHAVIOUR SEMINAR

The seminar at Cockle Park Farm, Morpeth, will feature three speakers. Dr Carol Hall of Nottingham Trent University will discuss whether equestrian professionals can recognise signs of stress in the ridden horse, and a presentation is to ask 'Why do we pat horses?' Norwegian Professor Knut Egil Bøe will report on a study that gave horses a choice if they were rugged or not. Ticket prices start at £15 (for Equine Behaviour Forum members). Email: equiphile@talktalk.net; tel: (01423) 770 144.



Jason Webb is sharing his training theory through an online programme

Log on for online training support

Owners and riders are being offered the chance to build a better relationship with their horse through an online training scheme.

YourHorsemanship.com has been designed and developed by Jason Webb, who works as a teacher, horse trainer and equine problem solver.

With over 200 foundation training video lessons, the Your Horsemanship programme can be applied to any horse and rider, at any stage in their training and allows you to learn any time, anywhere – as long as you have an internet connection.

As a member, you will be able to access printable guides and apply your learning in a real life environment with your horse.

Test your knowledge by working through online quizzes and make friends in the training chat forum.

It also offers access to an extensive library of re-education videos, featuring commonly experienced problems such as bucking, bolting, rearing, napping and spooking.

Visit: www.yourhorsemanship.com for more information, and sign up for a free trial.

Rescue horse enjoys a pamper session

A rescue horse is going from strength to strength after being treated and rehabilitated by charity World Horse Welfare.

Since arriving at the charity's Penny Farm,



Barry, whose care has been supported by nutrition company Alltech, has received veterinary checks and care, and his feet – which were long and overgrown – have been corrected and rebalanced by a farrier.

He has also been on a specially devised feeding regime to ensure he received the right nutrition at the right levels to gain weight and condition.

After being castrated, he has started in-hand and polework exercises to start his education and build strength and confidence.

The charity reports that Barry is "adapting to his new life very well and becoming more relaxed and trusting".

On a sunny day, he had his first bath at the farm, which he's said to have enjoyed and been well behaved throughout. To find out more about the work carried out by World Horse Welfare, visit: www.worldhorsewelfare.org.

Get 'Fit to Go'

A new initiative aimed at preventing the spread of equine disease has been launched by TV vet Emma Milne.

As part of the 'Fit to Go' campaign, a series of educational films have been released which show of vets and experts explaining what horse owners can do to prevent conditions like equine flu.

"Seeing first-hand how animals can suffer from preventable diseases is truly distressing," said Emma. "Vaccines alone have saved millions of lives, however we need to do more to help educate owners in preventable conditions."

In the first film, equine vet Karen Coumbe, discusses equine flu.

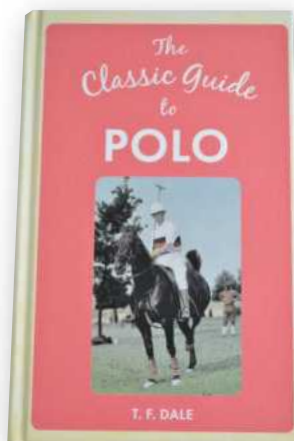
"There were 33 confirmed outbreaks of equine flu in the UK in 2014, so the importance of vaccination cannot be over emphasised," said Karen.

"Flu is linked to the movement and mixing of equines, so vaccination of horses on a yard – where either they or their companions are travelling – or new horses are coming and going, is so important."

For more information, or to watch the films, visit www.horsefittogo.com or www.facebook.com/horsefittogo.

Book shelf

Check out the latest equestrian reads, including a guide to polo, a novel for younger readers and an insightful training guide



The Classic Guide to Polo

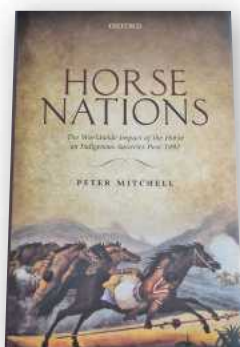
T F Dale, Amberley, £9.99

Over 100 years ago, in 1905, Thomas Francis Dale penned *Polo: Past and Present*, which at the time was seen as the definitive guide to the sport.

According to *The Classic Guide to Polo*, his observations are just as relevant today.

The author begins by looking at the history of the sport, considering its early beginnings as a game played with a stick and leather ball.

He shares how to train and manage a pony, reveals the rules of the game in England, and looks at the roles of umpires and referees.



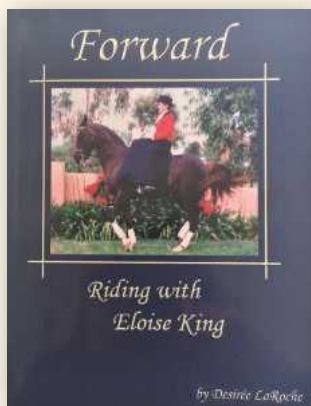
Horse Nations

Peter Mitchell, Oxford University Press, £35

A professor of African archaeology, Peter Mitchell considers the worldwide impact of the horse on indigenous societies of North and South America, southern Africa and Australasia.

He explores how horses significantly changed the lives of people across these four continents and how equines played a part in their history.

The text is complemented by a series of illustrations and photographs.



Book of the month

Forward: Riding with Eloise King

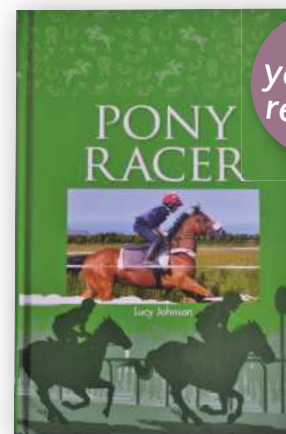
Desirée LaRoche and Eloise King, £10

Get to grips with lungeing, groundwork and ridden techniques with this easy-to-follow book.

Eloise King, who trained with Portuguese dressage master Nuno Oliveira, guides readers through her training methods that are designed to create lightness, balance and harmony between horse and rider.

She discusses everything from foundation work and tack and equipment, to rider position and lateral work.

The book contains interesting facts and quotes from Oliveira and King, such as 'you can only develop a muscle that is relaxed' and 'A flying change is nothing more than asking for canter when you are cantering'.



For younger readers

Pony Racer

Lucy Johnson, Forelock Books, £9.99

A book for younger readers that is also sure to capture the imagination of adult horse lovers, the central character of *Pony Racer* is a nine-year-old boy called Tom.

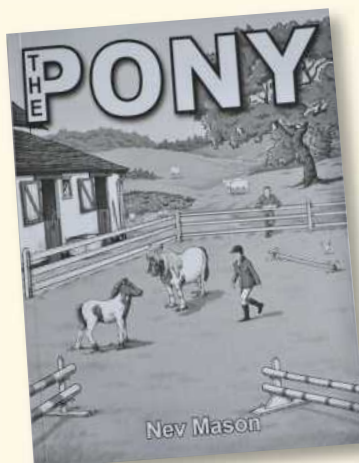
Living with foster parents at Hilltop House, Tom has left behind a difficult past but the memories of past troubles live on and happiness eludes him.

Then Tom meets a young pony called Leo and his fortunes – and life – changes for the better.

Tom learns to ride, and soon the pair forge a strong partnership.

But there are still many challenges to come for the youngster before he and Leo finally discover their true home – on a racecourse.

With a page-turning plot and lots of excitement along the way, this is perfect summer holiday reading.



The Pony

Nev Mason, Nev Mason Books, £4.95

The ups and downs experienced during the life of a Shetland Pony are chartered in this heartwarming tale.

Mandy's arrival one Christmas Eve is met with excitement and her future looks promising. But within a short space of time, she is orphaned and her young owner rejects her.

She is then sold on, passed from one owner and to another – sometimes enjoying happy times; but sadly not always.

Will Mandy ever find a special, loving home?

Turtle Top with Flex Bits
The Turtle Top mouthpiece design is now available in more options, including 55mm bridoon size rings (£96.95) and full cheeks (£128.99). Neue Schule.



RenaSan Equine
A natural antiseptic spray said to be effective against micro-organisms that cause mud fever, thrush, ringworm and strangles. Renapur, £17.95 for 750ml.



Surrey Shirt

A tailored cotton shirt with a stylish, spotty design, in sizes eight to 20. Schöffel, £59.95.

Me to You Knee High Socks

Featuring a padded sole and cute Tatty Teddy motif at the top. Carrots, from £11.50 for a twin pack.



Northern Well Loop Keyhub

Keep keys safe on this large carabiner hook that comes with a set of small keyrings. Battles, £6.



NEW PRODUCTS

THE LATEST EQUESTRIAN GEAR,
FOR YOU AND YOUR HORSE

Stephen's Polo Boots

Fine footwear made from top-quality leather that is designed to sit lower than traditional boots. World Wide Tack, from £650.



Lavender Shampoo

Contains lavender essential oil to clean the coat and help repel insects. Equimins, £6.95 for 500ml.



Premier Flex HA

Joint supplement said to offer high levels of beneficial ingredients, including glucosamine and chondroitin sulphate. Equine Answers, from £23.95 (500g).

Sparkle Browband

Turn heads with a browband inlaid with Swarovski crystals. Dressage Deluxe, from £48.





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LETTER

A zest for life



Gemma has shared Hudson's story after spotting him within the pages of Horse magazine

It was a nice surprise to see a picture of my boy Hudson in your July issue Q&A section, alongside a question about energy for increased exercise.

It was great to read the advice from your expert that said you don't always need to feed more if you are doing increased work.

Hudson is a 19-year-old Highland Pony and I believe a sensible diet and varied exercise are the key to keeping up energy levels.

Your advice on feeding a balancer further reflects our routine. Hudson has a simple feed of molasses-free chop with a comprehensive balancer to ensure he gets all his vits and mins.

He has a few supplements to support him as he gets older. Alongside measured hay and overnight turnout in summer he's in fabulous condition.

In fact, the day after his 19th birthday, in June, he won his class at a one-day event!

Hudson loves jumping, particularly cross-country, but I try to vary his activities to keep him fit and entertained. He has done driving, dressage, showing, showjumping, hunting, sponsored rides, hacking, TREC and gymkhanas (his favourite!).

In 2011, I was worried I might lose him to a liver disorder. He began to appear lethargic and slightly depressed, then lost condition and went downhill.

It took almost a year for him to pull through and his diet was important in supporting his recovery.

I had great advice from nutritionists at Dodson & Horrell and TopSpec, who were supportive, and I continue to feed milk thistle seed powder to support his liver.

By March 2012, the old Hudson began to appear and with gentle exercise he went from strength to strength. It took him a long time to regain his condition, but he is feeling fantastic at the moment and continues to astound me and his 'fan club' with his achievements.

Gemma Wiggins, by email



Stud Muffins

MADE
WITH
LOVE

RIDICULOUSLY TASTY HORSE TREATS!



Writing for a dressage judge is educational

Write on track

Horse magazine regularly shares tips on how to improve dressage test scores. My hint is to volunteer to write for a dressage judge.

I have regularly written for judges, at Prelim and Novice level.

Often, at the end of a test, the judge would comment there were a lot of marks lost due to the competitor not 'riding' the test.

They could have picked up lots of extra marks by thinking ahead and preparing for the transitions, riding corners correctly and making circles round and the right size.

I have certainly learned a lot and now have a better understanding of what judges are looking for. I have been able to benefit from this information when competing myself.

I have to say, however, especially at Prelim level, judges are all different. Some are more forgiving than others with their marks.

Another useful tip I have is to invest in copies of dressage tests that have diagrams and show the movements clearly. Study them carefully, and your marks should soar!

Elizabeth Leslie, Cheshire

Stop the itch

I read with interest your feature about Dinky, a horse that has suffered from a severe allergy (July issue). My New Forest Pony, Bronwyn, has suffered a similar allergic reaction, resulting in bald, raw, weeping patches on her chest, neck, back and face.

She was tested for ringworm, and sweet itch was considered, but in the end an unknown allergic skin reaction was diagnosed.

After a process of trial and error, I wash her weekly, or more often if she's itchy, with tea-tree shampoo. I use NAF Love the Skin He's In spray and/or Baby Oil if I see any patches starting or she seems itchy. I've also used NAF D-itch powder.

I supplement her feeds with a little soya oil for general skin health and I don't rug her unless the



Katy has found regularly washing her mare helps keep an allergic reaction at bay

temperature drops below freezing. I've found rugs of any sort, even fly sheets, make the problem worse.

This year, so far, I'm pleased to report there have been no patches of irritation and no 'abnormal' itching.

Katy Martin, by email



KC enjoying his prize

A real treat

I was lucky enough to win a Likit Starter Kit in a *Horse magazine* Facebook competition.

My horse, KC, was delighted with the prize, and has found the Likit holder very entertaining!

So my daughter Caitlin's pony, Shaun, didn't miss out, we were given another holder by a friend.

They stand side by side in the yard and enjoy their Likits in the sunshine!

Lisa Fahy, Surrey

Write in to win!

The writer of this issue's Star Letter has won a 45-pack of Stud Muffins treats, worth £9.99. Each runner-up receives a 15-pack of Stud Muffins treats, worth £3.99.

To share your views, email: joanna.browne@mytimemedia.com or write to the address on page 3. Include a full address and telephone number. *Horse* reserves



the right to edit letters as necessary and publish them in any medium.

Submission of emails and letters to *Horse magazine* implies acceptance of these conditions.

NEXT ISSUE: Win a brilliant Likit Starter Kit, worth £19.99!



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Runner up letter wins a 15 pack



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Galloping GALLERY

Send in a photo of your horse or pony for our readers' gallery and you could win a brilliant prize, courtesy of **Toggi**

Hello up there ➡

June Chapman sent in this cute pic of her granddaughter, Amelia, saying hello to Lucy (left) and Phoebe.

"Lucy is being fostered by Fairbourne Manor Stables, Kent, from Happy Endings Charity," June tells us.



⬆ Dressage dreams

Alanna Clarke is hoping to excel in dressage with her new horse, Singing Lantana.

"She has a lovely temperament and I'm looking forward to bringing her on," says Alanna, from South Yorks.



➡ Mine's a pint

Five-year-old Louie (right), shows what he thinks of the local beer on a pub ride.

"We are bringing on Louie for our grandchildren to ride, and took him for a walk down to the pub," says Martin Park, of Chippenham, Wiltshire, who took the photo.

"I had been told that horses are partial to a drop of beer, but Louie wasn't so sure!"

Also enjoying the sunshine were Louie's stable mate Bonnie and Martin's wife, Sally.

Special memories ➡

Cathy Craine has shared this photo, which she reveals is very special to her.

"This is my beautiful angel, Sherry, and I enjoying a canter in the Isle of Man," says Cathy. "Sadly, I lost her to an accident in the field, the day after it was taken."



A reason to smile ➡

"When I'm with Lacey, I smile from the inside as she is my soul mate," says Mandy Sanderson, of Saltfleetby, Lincs, who is clearly enjoying taking part in a fun ride.



DO YOU HAVE A GORGEOUS PHOTO TO SHARE?

Email one high-resolution photo and some information about your horse, plus your name and address, to joanna.browne@mytimemedia.com.

Minty fresh breath ➡

Rhea, of Ridgway Stables, Wimbledon, shows her appreciation after being treated to a mint with a hole.

The mare is favourite of Samantha Ellis: "She is loved by adults and children and her favourite thing is being groomed. A wither scratch makes her stick her top lip out!"



Big hugs ➡

"Here's my daughter, Jennah, enjoying a cuddle with our Arab gelding, Titan," says Jane Kideer of Chorley, Lancs.



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OUR EXPERT

Michael Peace



Michael Peace is a horse trainer based in Oxfordshire. His 'Think Equus' approach follows a formula based on two-way trust, without using any form of pressure.

Building two-way trust

Equine trainer **Michael Peace** reveals the secret to building a solid relationship with your horse, in order to create a lasting – and happy – partnership

Every rider strives for a great relationship with their horse and when you get it right, you feel as though you can do anything together.

For many owners, the partnership they have with their horse may be far from perfect, but often they learn to live with certain quirks or put up with 'naughty' behaviour.

You may hear people reveal they have accepted certain things their horse won't do. Comments such as: "He's always been bargy to handle – he won't change now" or "I can't ride him down that lane as he won't go past the pigs" are not unusual.

However, it's likely these issues will show up in other areas of riding and training, and cause problems when they are least expected.

You may find yourself at a show next to a pig farm, for example. Or if your bargy horse gets scared during a loading session, he could take off or knock you into the side of the lorry or trailer.

"Often, the easiest thing to do is accept the flaws in the relationship we have with our horse, instead of striving to iron them out," says trainer Michael Peace. "The good news is it's not difficult to achieve a harmonious partnership based on mutual respect and trust. Once you have this, there are no limits to what you can do together."

The 50:50 theory

"There are various ways to get a horse to do what you want him to," says Michael. "With training based on using pressure or even punishment, many horses will give in and do as the trainer requires, just so they get an easier life."

"Bribing the horse with treats is another way to encourage him to participate in what you are asking him to do. The question is whether the horse is completing the task because he wants to or because he wants the treats?



"I'm not a fan of harsh training methods or bribery and I don't believe either way results in a long-term solution.

"I want the horses I work with to be completely committed to the tasks I ask them to do, and this only happens if there is mutual respect and trust."

Michael's training theory suggests horse and rider work on a 50:50 basis, where neither party has the upper hand. It's not about domination or control, but more about cooperation.

"The balance in the relationship is the responsibility of each party – you help each other out whenever necessary, because you recognise the value of each other's input," says the trainer.

"In a genuine partnership, each party commits to this balance, and there is no resentment or exploitation. It is a relationship founded on respect and responsibility and each party must work to make the adjustments necessary to keep the partnership in balance at all times.

"Horses have evolved to live in groups, and find it harder to survive outside on their own. They are sociable animals and create effective interactions with other members of their group.

"They know and respect the position of others and understand that if one horse upsets the

balance of the herd, it jeopardises the stability and must be addressed instantly by all members.

"For horse owners, the big advantage of this is that horses understand the concept of cooperation perfectly, before we even begin working with them. It isn't something they need to learn from us, but rather something we should understand and learn from them.

"We have to learn how to live and work with horses the way they live with each other, and trainers who master this concept become exceptional horse people.

"The 50:50 theory proposes that you work at a level of communication where you never get into battles or confrontations with your horse. It's a working relationship where you both understand the importance of maintaining the balance to keep the partnership alive."

The middle ground

"I firmly believe that no bad horses are born," Michael continues. "There may be bad horses about but they didn't start like that.

"Some are easier to get on with than others but all have some softness in them that can be developed if we know how to do it. The 'middle ground' theory helps people understand how to have a better working relationship with a horse.

"All horses have an area of tolerance, where you can work with a certain amount of inconsistency and get away with it without causing problems. Provided you work within this area of tolerance (or middle ground), you can be too hard sometimes, and the horse won't resent you, or too soft, and the horse won't exploit you.

"In simple terms, the relationship can go slightly out of balance without you doing any permanent damage.

"If, however, you work outside the limits of the middle ground and are much too hard or too soft ▶



Michael believes the key to successful training is down to mutual respect and trust

on your horse on a regular basis, you will begin to damage the relationship.

"The 'middle ground' will begin to erode and cause the horse to become less generous.

"In this case, the middle ground will eventually become a fine line and the horse will give you little room for manoeuvre in either direction.

"It is often at this point that horses are sent to me because they have become difficult or dangerous and it's my job to get that middle ground area of tolerance back in place again."

Freedom matters

While the 50:50 theory and middle ground concepts may sound confusing, Michael says it's quite simple.

"It's about watching your horse carefully to see how he's dealing with things," he says. "And for many horse owners, it might be a case of changing the way they deal with situations, so they learn to think more like their horse."

Michael understands the importance of keeping yourself safe when handling and riding horses, but he also points out that the looser and freer horses feel, the less likely they are to display 'dangerous' behaviour.

"Horses need to know they can move their legs in case they need to flee from danger," says Michael. "When they become trapped by us, such as tying them up tightly, using pressure halters, trying to clip a frightened horse in a stable or using gadgets to bring their heads in when riding they are more likely to react.

"I teach all the young or 'problem' horses to allow me to work around them while they remain loose. That way, I am giving them choices, rather than forcing anything upon them.

"If they want to get away from me, they can, but once they realise I am OK, they will choose to hang out with me anyway."

Michael demonstrates this with Cordi, a three-year-old Trakehner mare, who has been brought in to be backed.

"Cordi is a lovely blank canvas," Michael says. "She hasn't had any bad experiences with humans, so she has no reason not to trust them. These horses are the easiest ones to work with, because from day one you can teach them that humans are their friends."

Michael starts by grooming Cordi and looks for areas the mare likes to be brushed, so he can spend more time on them.



Michael looks for ways to help Cordi



"Groundwork is everything you do with your horse that's not riding," says Michael

"I want her to enjoy being groomed and realise that having me around is a good experience, not one she dreads or fears," he adds.

"I'll do little things to help her, while I'm here," says Michael, while removing some 'gunk' from the mare's eye."

On this note, Michael points out the importance of not overdoing the affection. "It's essential she doesn't find me creepy to be around," he says. "I'm not going to smother her with huge cuddles – it's more about finding out what she likes."

Great groundwork

Michael brings Cordi out of the stable in a headcollar, using a long rope so the mare has the choice to move away from the trainer if she's unsure about something.

He demonstrates some simple groundwork techniques any horse owner can use to test where they are in their relationship with their horse.

"With a horse I haven't worked with before, I want to know how they react on the end of the rope," he states. "I will walk forward and stop, expecting the horse to stop when I do, without invading my space or ploughing into me."



Cordi must learn to stop moving when Michael stops

As Cordi hasn't done any of this work before, she doesn't know she's expected to halt when Michael does, so at first she keeps walking.

"I don't get tough with her as I'm not judging her for something she doesn't know yet," he says. "I simply back her up, using a little correction with

Michael's top tips for better training

- A poorly fitting saddle can lead to behavioural issues, so make sure your horse's saddle fits. Even if it's been fitted by a qualified person, listen to your horse and let him tell you whether he is working comfortably.
- Constantly look for signs your horse is relaxed. Lowering of the head, ears cocked out to the sides, softening of the eye and smooth movement are all signs the horse is happy with what's going on.
- Make your intentions clear and be honest with your horse. If you know something is going to scare him, don't trick him into doing it as this can cause resentment.
- Regularly test your groundwork skills to ensure they're in place. Remember groundwork is everything you do with your horse that's not riding.
- Mark yourself on a scale of 0-100 to see where you are with your horse. Zero would be you have no say over what happens in your relationship, whereas 100 would be you controlling everything the horse does. Aim for the middle ground of 50:50.



Look for signs your horse is calm and relaxed



Michael uses the rope to regain her attention



The mare quickly learns what Michael wants her to do and is rewarded with a pat

the rope, and ask her to stand where she should have stopped originally. Then she's rewarded with a pat, before repeating the exercise.

"If, however, Cordi decides to stop focusing on what I am asking her to do, I will quietly bring her attention back to me with a little feel on the rope."

Soon, Cordi understands what Michael is asking her to do and halts when Michael does.

"It doesn't take long to teach the horse this lesson and it might not seem important to a lot of people," Michael says. "However, how your horse behaves around you on the ground is a sign of how he views his relationship with you and how he will react under saddle."

Once Cordi understands the concept of stopping and starting, Michael asks the mare to move over to the left and then the right, positioning himself on the outside of her.

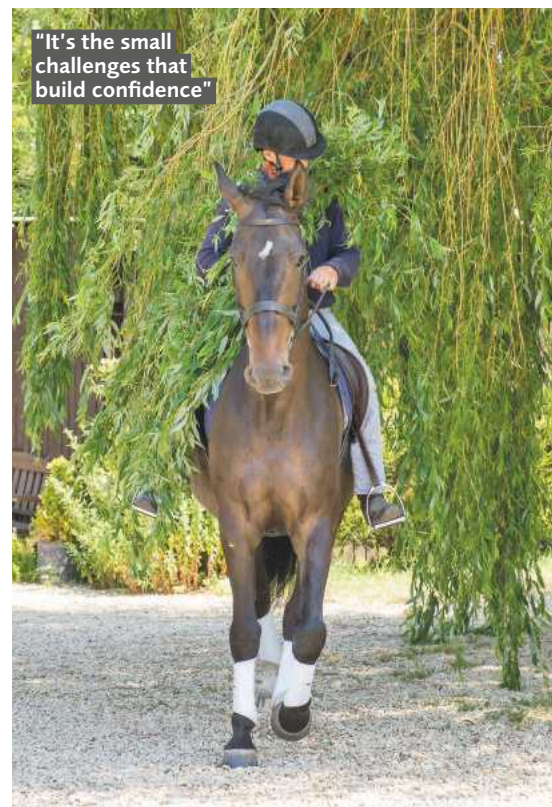
At first, he uses a little rope pressure to ask Cordi to move over, but once she gets the idea, all it takes is Michael's body language.

"If, at first, a horse doesn't respond, I might replicate the behaviour horses would use in a herd environment," Michael adds.

"If you watch horses in a herd, they often bump each other with their heads to direct where they want them to go."

Michael gently taps his riding hat against Cordi's neck to 'bump' her over and the mare moves away in a calm and relaxed manner. ▶

Horseworld Building a bond



Building confidence

Michael's next model is Teddy, a 10-year-old eventer who has come in for training because he was scared of flapping objects.

"It's perfectly natural for a horse to be scared of something," says Michael. "It's my job to let Teddy know I will help him overcome his fears, but at the same time he has to deal with them."

Michael starts by riding Teddy in the round pen and points out that when the horse gets worried he raises his head and hollows his outline.

When Teddy hollows in this way, Michael bounces around a little in the saddle to show Teddy he's not happy with this way of moving.

This is Michael's way of communicating his thoughts to Teddy through his own body language. Because Teddy finds Michael's movement unbalancing, he looks for a more comfortable way of going.

When Teddy lowers his head, Michael sits still to show the horse this is the desired response.

Teddy soon becomes less anxious, so the trainer takes him out into the field to continue with the same kind of work.

"It's all about building small steps at a time," he says. "You have to move the horse slightly out of his comfort zone, to build his confidence, but not far enough to frighten him."

"While Teddy's fear is perceived to be flapping objects, he is actually quite tense about other aspects of life, so I want him to feel relaxed in everything he does."

On the day of our photoshoot, Michael had been working with Teddy for four weeks, so he demonstrates the progress the horse has made by riding him up to bunting, which was flapping in the wind.

Michael rewards Teddy with a big pat to show him he appreciates the effort he made.

He finishes by riding Teddy through an overhanging tree before riding him back to the stable to finish the session.

"All these little challenges build confidence," Michael states. "If your horse is scared of a specific thing, it's not just a case of introducing that one thing and helping him to deal with it."

"Instead, it's about building confidence to cope with anything. The more small challenges you throw in, the better the results will be in all aspects of life." ■



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Dan with nine-year-old DHI Bart Jan and Cricket the Whippet

A life worth living

Talented dressage rider **Daniel Greenwood** reveals why he loves his job so much and discusses his plans for the future

If you're ever at a dressage event and see Daniel Greenwood's name mentioned on the list of competitors, make time to go and watch him ride.

The 41-year-old oozes natural talent and has a riding position to die for. He's also renowned for his sympathetic approach to training horses, which is why he's so good at producing youngsters, as well as developing horses to the top of the sport.

Arriving at his yard near Moreton-in-Marsh, Gloucestershire, I immediately pick up on the relaxed atmosphere.

All the horses look happy and content, and why wouldn't they? They get turned out in the fields most days, go hacking once or twice a week and do polework, as well as dressage.

It seems the idea that dressage horses are wrapped up in cotton wool is a thing of the past. These days, good trainers realise the importance of allowing horses to be horses, and Dan wholeheartedly agrees.

"I love what I do and I want to ride happy horses," the rider reveals. "Variety is key in their training and daily life, and if they're happy then they are more willing to work with me." ▶



"I want to ride happy horses," says Dan

Words: Nicky Moffatt; Photography: Jon Stroud. Thanks to Saracen Horse Feeds for setting up this photoshoot. Visit: www.saracenhorsefeeds.com

Dan's horses

HIS HIGHNESS (Hugo)

Vital statistics: A three-year-old KWPN gelding by Wynton, owned by Dan, Jamie Reynolds, Cherry Elvin and Cat Wood.

Dan says: "Hugo was champion foal at the KWPN grading and was broken in this summer. He has mega movement and a great brain. I am very excited about him."



HUMMUS VON SINGING (Hummus)

Vital statistics: A four-year-old Trakehner stallion by Prince Patmos, owned by Marleen Fewtrell.

Dan says: "Hummus has qualified for the British Dressage (BD) National Championships four-year-old classes this year. He has a straightforward temperament and is fun to work with."



EXIGE M (Freddie)

Vital statistics: A six-year-old gelding by Samarant, owned by Jenny Welham.

Dan says: "Freddie was last year's five-year-old champion at the BD Nationals and has qualified for all the six-year-old classes this year. He won his first Medium recently."



DHI BART JAN (Bart)

Vital statistics: A nine-year-old gelding by Sydney, owned by Sara Lucas.

Dan says: "This horse was ridden and produced by Antonia Brown. He will hopefully go out at Prix St Georges level next year."



GF DEVILLE (Bertie)

Vital statistics: A 10-year-old stallion by Dimaggio, owned by Sandy Senior.

Dan says: "Bertie is a great horse. He has qualified for the Prix St Georges class at the BD Nationals this year and has started competing internationally."



Early life

It was a teacher at primary school who first introduced Dan into the world of horses. He was just eight years old at the time, but loved riding right from the start.

"The teacher who took us riding was called Mrs Embleton," recalls the rider. "We went to a local riding school once a week, where we had group lessons, so I have a lot to thank her for."

"I carried on with my lessons but somewhere along the way, I managed to borrow friends' ponies and even shared a few."

Aged 14, Dan, who was living in Hebden Bridge, Yorkshire, at that time, got his first pony on loan.

He soon became involved with the local Pony Club and competed in showjumping, eventing and dressage.

"I thoroughly enjoyed it," Dan remembers. "I already knew by then that I wanted a career with horses and when I was 16, a lucky break led me in the direction of dressage."

A summer surprise

Through Pony Club, there was an annual invitation for a member to go and work at a dressage yard in Switzerland for the summer.

"Historically, someone went over each year," says Dan. "If you wanted to go you had to apply, so I did and luckily I was given the opportunity."

"The job was at a private stables working for a lovely family who provided accommodation and training in return for yard work."

"I was a terrible groom, though, because I didn't know anything! I'm not sure how valuable my 'hard work' was to the family. In fact, I look back on it now and think you poor people for having to put up with me all summer."

While Dan admits his grooming skills weren't quite up to scratch back then, he remembers the experience fondly and says



Dan has several up-and-coming dressage superstars

the knowledge and skills he gained while he was there were invaluable.

"I loved every second of it and absorbed each piece of information I was taught," he states. "By the time I left at the end of the summer, I think I was quite good at being a groom."

New opportunities

Dan found himself faced with a dilemma when his parents wanted him to do A-level exams.

"I didn't want to stay on at school because I wanted to work with horses," he recalls.

"Eventually, we came up with a compromise and I enrolled onto a two-year equine course at an agricultural college in Nottinghamshire."

"The course allowed me to take my A-levels and British Horse Society Assistant Instructor



The rider always wanted to work with horses

Putting seven-year-old Romanno Stromboli through his paces



5 things Dan couldn't live without

1 Saracen horse feed: "I particularly like the Sports Horse Pencils because the horses do really well on them and they are non-heating. Also, they are highly palatable and the horses love them."

2 Spalding Britannica dressage saddles: "These saddles are comfortable right from new and they seem to fit the horses well and allow them to move freely. I am a big fan of them."

3 Elevator bridles: "I love the fact you can customise the different parts of the bridle to get an exact fit for each horse. Also, due to the fact the noseband strap passes over the top of the headpiece, they reduce poll pressure."

4 Casco Mistral Helmet: "I think these helmets look so smart and I love mine. It is comfortable, lightweight and keeps my head cool when I am riding."

5 Kieffer neoprene dressage girths: "I have used these girths for years and have never had one that rubs the horse. They are easy to wash, look smart and allow the horse freedom of movement."

"I guess I was cannon fodder, but I didn't care and amazingly, I didn't have any nasty falls"

(BHSAI) qualification alongside each other, so everyone was happy."

It was during this course that Dan met Cherry Elvin, who he says has been a big part of his life ever since, and a continual support.

"Cherry was one of my tutors at college," he says. "She has been with me throughout my whole journey so far and I have one of her young horses at my yard."

It was through Cherry that an amazing opportunity arose.

"During the college course, we were lucky enough to go to Germany and visit some famous breeding and training yards," Dan continues.

"For those who know about dressage, we went to Warendorf [a large German horse auction venue], the Klimkes' yard [home of the late gold medallist Reiner], the Schockemohles [home to German showjumper Paul, who now specialises in breeding] and many more big breeding stations.

"When we arrived at the Kasselmann's yard, which is one of the biggest equestrian training establishments in the world, I was in awe.

"I thought, well this looks jolly nice so I asked if they had any jobs going. Fortunately, they did."

Dan ended up working at Kasselmans for two years, breaking in young horses that were due to be sold at auction.

"That was an incredible experience," he remembers. "We had 150 horses in training at one time, so I got to ride some great horses."

"I guess I was cannon fodder, but I didn't care and amazingly I didn't have any nasty falls."

"As well as the youngsters, I got to ride some of the older, more experienced dressage horses, so I was lucky."

Hard work pays off

On returning to the UK, Dan's good friend Cherry provided another exciting offer for him.

"Cherry was having lessons with Olympic dressage rider Emile Faurie and thought it would be good for me to go and work there," says Dan. "I ended up staying at Emile's yard for 10 years."

"Although I started off as a groom, Emile was incredibly generous to me and soon I was riding and competing horses for clients."

"I didn't have any of my own horses at this time, but I was given some talented horses to ride and competed up to Prix St Georges level."

Dan has found products he can trust



"I did a lot of teaching from Emile's yard and was started to build up some of my own clients and owners."

"Eventually, as with everything in life, it was time to move on. My partner Jamie (Reynolds) and I decided to set up a yard on our own, and it so happened that dressage judge Lady Inchcape's yard was available. ▶

5 things you didn't know about Dan

- 1 Dan is a vegetarian and hasn't eaten meat since he was 11 years old.
- 2 The rider studied archaeology in his A-level exams.
- 3 He admits to being able to take a nap anywhere. "I can literally doze off wherever I am," says Dan. "I only need 10 minutes and then I am refreshed and ready to go again."
- 4 Dan only drives automatic vehicles. "Gears are exhausting," says the rider, who has a new automatic Equitrek lorry on order. "One foot and half a brain works much better for me."
- 5 The rider says he loves doing house work when time permits. "It's so satisfying when everything is gleaming," Dan concludes. "I guess I am a touch OCD really."



Dan and his partner Jamie are based at Lady Inchcape's yard

"I am very lucky because I love my job and getting up in the morning is never a chore for me"

"It was scary going from being in full-time employment to being self-employed, but we've had great staff, clients and owners, who have all made our job so much easier.

"That was 12 years ago, and we're still based with Lady Inchcape today."

Breeding marvellous

Nowadays, Dan makes a living through teaching and selling horses. And in the past few years the rider and his partner Jamie have taken an interest in breeding quality dressage horses of their own.

"The breeding side is so much fun and can be really rewarding," says Dan. "I have a super

broodmare who has produced some stunning foals so far.

"One of her sons – the seven-year-old Romanno Stromboli (Ollie) – was National Champion as a five-year-old and will hopefully do Prix St Georges [level tests] next year."

Dan has recently become a dressage evaluator for the British Equestrian Federation – where young horses are graded for a specific discipline.

"I really enjoy the young horses, but I also want to see how much further I can go with my dressage career," says the rider.

"I have ridden at Grand Prix level before but with [horse] soundness issues, it's often difficult

to stay competitive at top level. One minute you can be up there and the next minute you're not.

"I am in a great position at the moment because I have several horses who will be ready to go out at Prix St Georges next year.

"The trouble with dressage, like any other discipline involving horses, is you never know what's around the corner.

"Horses can – and do – go lame and you don't always know if a horse is going to reach top level until you get there.

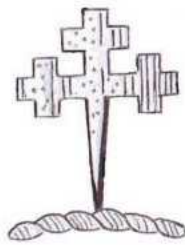
"I'm lucky because I love my job and getting up in the morning is never a chore. Hopefully there will be many more years of fun to follow." ■



Dan with Whippets Lupin and Cricket and Cockapoo Lola



All the horses go hacking once or twice a week



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TRAINING

20 PAGES of expert advice to help you get the best from your horse

BOOST YOUR SCORES

Take on board smart advice from Grand Prix rider Alice Oppenheimer and see your dressage marks soar!

Alice looks at how to encourage a horse to work with his poll at the highest point, in a correct dressage outline (see page 38).

She also reveals how to make teaching a horse shoulder-in and leg-yield easier.





OUR TRAINER
Harry Meade

Harry's CV
Harry is one of Britain's leading event riders. He finished third

at Badminton last year and was a member of the silver medal-winning team at the World Championships. He was also voted 2014 Rider of the Year and is a Brand Ambassador for Dodson & Horrell. Harry is always looking for new rides at all levels. For more information, visit: www.harrymeade.com.

Jenny's aims

Jenny, from Wiltshire, has owned Cracker for just over a year. The 16.1hh warmblood mare is aged nine. Jenny competes Cracker in dressage and showjumping classes, but she would also like to event in the future.



OUR RIDER
Jenny Newman

Learn how to:

- Have a secure jumping position;
- Develop a crisper canter;
- Maintain control after fences.

Masterclass

with Harry Meade



1 Making positional changes

Watching Jenny warm up, Harry notices the rider's stirrups are quite long for jumping. Her current stirrup length causes her to perch forward, which will make her position less secure over fences.

Jenny is riding in a general purpose saddle, which has straighter cut flaps than a jumping saddle. Since she is long in the thigh, the cut of the saddle doesn't allow enough space for her to sit in a correct jumping position.

"I appreciate you do a bit of everything with Cracker, so going to the expense of

buying a jumping saddle might not be on your list of priorities," says Harry. "However, if you do decide to take up eventing seriously, you might want to look into more favourable saddle options."

"Otherwise you are starting with a significant handicap in terms of position."

Harry asks Jenny to put her stirrups up two holes, which the rider says feels "weird and very short".

"If you change something it will feel different – because it is different – and as creatures of habit, 'different' often feels wrong at first. However,

bear with it and you will gradually realise the benefits," Harry replies.

"With shorter stirrups, you are able to create more bend in the leg, which allows the thigh to come forward and the lower leg to become more stable."

"It means you can fold your body better as you go over fences, rather than tipping forwards, and you'll be able to sit upright quicker on landing."

After making the adjustment to her stirrups, Harry asks the rider to canter around the arena to get used to the new feeling.



2 Creating a crisper canter

As the pair pick up canter, Cracker dictates the pace and sets off in a fast canter that lacks balance.

"Bring your body out of the saddle slightly, but lift up through your sternum to encourage her to slow down, rather than just pulling with your arms," Harry instructs.

Harry gets Jenny to ride around the arena in canter, riding with the reins in one hand and then the other.

"Swap the reins from one hand to the other every second," he advises. "It's a good coordination exercise and it will stop you thinking about pulling against your horse."

"It will also stabilise your lower leg and encourage you to use your upper body to slow the horse down."

Since Cracker is lacking self-carriage, the trainer tells Jenny that a good 'crisp' canter is important for jumping, and that she must aim to get to the stage where she can use the full range of 'gears' in this pace.

"As part of your warm-up, ask your mare to collect to near walking pace, without fixing your hand, and then ride forward into a bigger canter," he suggests. "Be clear with your intentions and keep your sternum raised, rather than perching forward." ▶



4 Teaching

Jenny tells Harry that when fences are introduced, Cracker becomes keen and this often results in a lack of rider control.

"The good news is, there's a great exercise for that," Harry informs her. "It's something I do with all my young horses to teach them not to rush into – or away from – fences."

Harry asks Jenny to approach a small cross-pole in trot. On landing in canter, he wants her to ride a trot and then a walk transition, perform a half pirouette towards the outside of the arena, before picking up trot to jump the fence the other way. He asks her to keep repeating this routine back and forth.

"This exercise is useful for teaching the horse to think and wait for the fences and breaks the habit of the horse diving into a turn after a jump," Harry explains.

"It's easy to jump a fence and then allow the horse to cut the corner, so it is good practice to teach the opposite.

"We're not trying to confuse the horse, or discipline him in an abrupt way, we're simply teaching him to respond to our aids, so we can ask him to go anywhere we wish during a showjumping round.

"I deliberately asked you to turn a pirouette to the outside, not the inside, as we want to train



Cracker swings her quarters out during the pirouettes...

TIP from the TOP

Over small fences, avoid folding your body too much. Exaggerated folding can put you and your horse out of balance.



...so Harry gets on Cracker to show Jenny how to ride them correctly

3

Using pirouettes to aid control

As Jenny has said that Cracker tends to get faster, on the forehand and cuts in across the turns after a fence, Harry suggests a useful exercise that will help the rider control her horse's speed and direction, both on the flat and over fences.

He asks her to walk a square, making a quarter pirouette (or turn on the haunches) at each corner.

"Think of riding square turns, rather than a curve," says Harry. "As you get to each corner of your square, use your outside aids to ask her forehand to walk around the haunches."

Cracker tries to swing her quarters out during the pirouette, rather than move her forehand around her quarters, so Harry gets on to show Jenny how to correct this.

"Keep walking throughout the pirouette," he tells her. "If you halt, the pirouette can

easily become a backward movement and the horse will get stuck, or step backwards and out to the side.

"Be strict with your leg aids so she can't drift one way or the other," he continues. "So, if you are making a pirouette to the left and she tries to swing her quarters right, put your right leg back to prevent this happening."

Soon, Cracker accepts the aids and offers Harry some good square turns. Having watched Harry, Jenny is now clearer about what she needs to do, and back on board she performs some better walk pirouettes.

"Great, now you can follow the same principles for jumping," Harry praises. "The coordination developed from the pirouettes will help you think about straightness and turns when jumping. You will also be more able to achieve the correct aids."

Harry wants Jenny to land straighter after fences



the horse to wait

Transitions and pirouettes after fences help to slow her down

TIP from the TOP

To help you aim for the middle of a fence, use striped poles so that you can aim to jump over the middle stripe of each one.

Cracker becomes keen when the fences come out



the horse to not always think they are going to turn in the obvious direction – towards the centre of the arena," the trainer adds.

At first, Cracker is reluctant to stop after the jump and shows resistance during the downward transitions. Instead she keeps going until she reaches the short sides, which force her to stop.

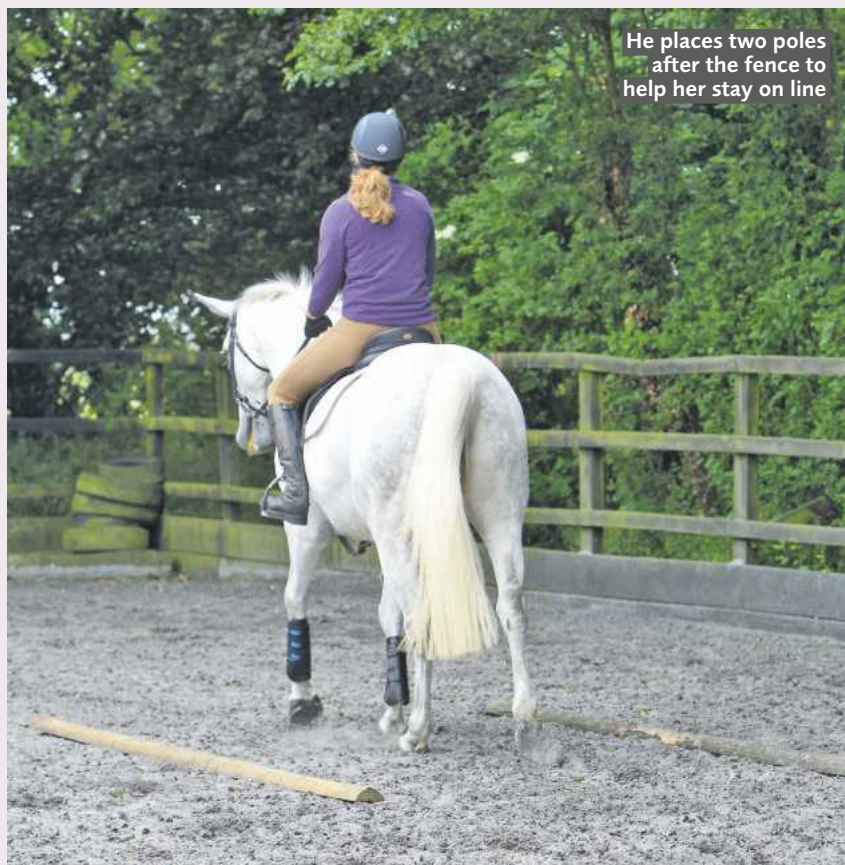
After Jenny adopts a more upright position with her upper body in the air, and on landing,

Cracker becomes more responsive to her rider's requests.

"In the half pirouettes, use your outside aids and inside leg, but avoid pulling back with the

inside hand," he reminds the rider, who has lots to think about and forgets to stop Cracker swinging her quarters out during the pirouettes first time round.

He places two poles after the fence to help her stay on line



5

Being strict about straightness

Although Jenny is aiming for the centre of the cross-pole, Cracker anticipates the turn after the fence, which means their landing isn't straight.

When Jenny has finished riding her walk transition after the jump, Harry asks her to halt and look behind her, so she can see how far from the centre of the jump Cracker has taken her.

The trainer places two poles a metre or so apart after the fence, and asks Jenny to ride down the channel between the poles when she lands.

"When you land, lift your chest up and keep your horse straight between your legs and hands," he tells her. "Focus on your line through the poles and then make your downward transitions to trot and walk."

The exercise works brilliantly for the duo. While Cracker tries to dive into the turn after the fence, Jenny focuses on the poles and manages to ride through the middle of them.

"Excellent, well done," Harry praises. "I want you to imagine the poles are there whenever you jump a fence, so that you stay straight." ▶

TIP from the TOP

Practise jumping out of trot. It teaches the horse to use his own eye to judge take-off and the rider can't interfere.

Jenny and Cracker make a great job of tackling the oxer



6

Approaching jumps on a good line

Harry raises the cross-pole into a small upright, to up the challenge. He asks Jenny to strike up to canter on a straight approach to the fence, and continue with the walk transitions and half pirouettes on landing, before striking back into canter to jump the fence the other way.

The slightly higher fence and canter approach gives Cracker more power and Jenny has to be extra effective, but they still manage to do a good job.

Harry then makes the fence into a small square oxer, which requires Jenny to achieve a crisp canter in the first three strides after strike off.

"It's so important to be able to get an active canter without too much ground cover, and since this exercise only allows a short, straight approach to the fence, it's a great test of your ability to do this," says Harry.

Similar to the previous part of the exercise, Harry wants Jenny to strike up to canter, jump the fence, land and sit up tall, as if preparing for walk, but still with a soft hand.

However, instead of walking this time, Harry tells Jenny to utilise her newfound control to stay in canter and make a 90-degree turn (to ride a square turn as opposed to a quarter circle).

Jenny strikes up to an active, balanced canter that they have been perfecting throughout the session, jumps the fence and on landing, sits up.

Cracker immediately lowers her quarters to engage, before continuing into a balanced square turn. The pair leave the turn with absolute straightness and softness.

If Jenny was riding from one fence to another, it would be a masterclass of control and a far cry from Cracker's usual way of accelerating on her forehand into an oval after a fence.

"How brilliant, well done," Harry praises her. "The quality of the canter, self-carriage, straightness and softness are all in place."

WHAT OUR RIDER LEARNED

"It felt weird when Harry asked me to put my stirrups up two holes, but I got used to it and was able to raise my sternum more after fences to help Cracker rebalance," says Jenny.

"The pirouette exercises made me realise I need to be more precise and as a result, Cracker responded to my leg aids better.

"At the end of the session, I discovered how important it is to have a good quality canter – or a crisp canter as Harry called it.

"Once we had achieved this canter, Cracker felt fantastic and what a difference it made! There was no more pulling before or after the fence and we were both soft and relaxed as a result."

"Cracker felt soft and relaxed at the end"



● Thank you to Dodson & Horrell (www.dodsonandhorrell.com) for their help with this feature. Tel: 0845 345 2627 to speak to a member of the nutritional helpline team.

10-minute exercise

INFLUENCE YOUR HORSE'S LEAD LEG ON LANDING

Does your horse prefer landing on one particular leg after a jump? Are you able to influence which lead he takes?

A horse that always lands on the same leg will find tackling a course harder than one that is equally happy on either. This is because having to go back to trot during a round will disrupt his rhythm and balance.

The following useful exercise will help encourage your horse to land on the correct lead, and keep him straighter in the air.

SET UP

In an arena of at least 20-metres X 40-metres, build a small upright fence over X on the centre line, parallel to the short sides of the arena.

Ensure the fence has a ground line and place a pole on the floor two big human strides (about six feet or 1.8-metres) away from the fence on the landing side.

In a 20-metre X 40-metre arena, you should have around 8-metres after the pole before you reach the edge of the arena.

THE EXERCISE

- 1 Pick up canter and ride a circle on the rein your horse favours – if he prefers to land on the right lead after a jump, begin on that leg. Canter to the fence in an active pace.
- 2 The pole on the landing side will encourage your horse to lower his head, round his back and take an active first step on landing. When you are in the air over the fence, look up to the right slightly and open your inside hand so that you encourage the horse to land on the right lead.
- 3 Repeat the exercise several times on the same rein, staying on a circle until your horse understands what to do.
- 4 Next, move on to his weaker rein. Use a little more left leg and open your left hand a bit wider to help him land on the left lead. You could angle the landing pole slightly to encourage the horse to follow the circle round to the left.
- 5 If you are unsuccessful at the first few attempts, don't give up. Take a break and try again.

The benefits:

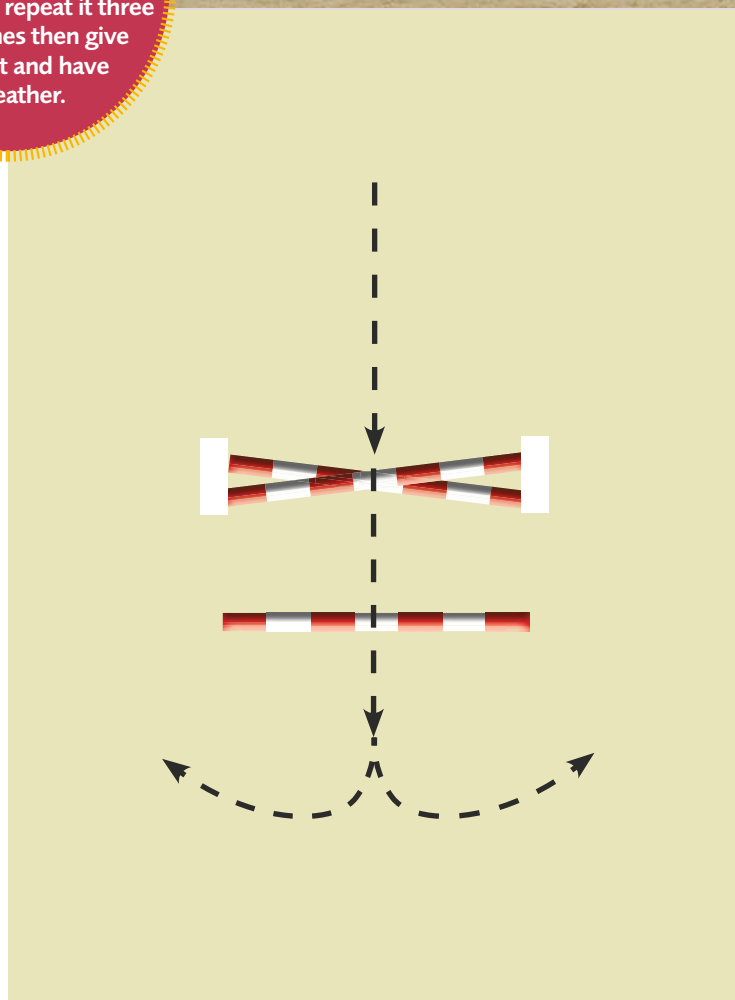
- Enables you to influence the leg your horse lands on after a fence, so you don't have to return to trot when jumping a course.
- Makes you more aware of where your own bodyweight is and how it influences the horse.
- Improves suppleness and straightness.

Use a small fence and a ground pole to teach your horse to land on either canter lead after a fence



top tip

Horses learn by repetition, so once you have cracked the exercise, repeat it three or four times then give him a pat and have a breather.



Lighten up

A few simple changes to your schooling programme can make a huge difference to your horse's way of going, says dressage rider Alice Oppenheimer

Viv Pearson describes her coloured horse TJ (Trefddyn Crackerjack) as "fun and talented", but says he can be a challenge at times.

She bought the seven-year-old as a project horse to sell on, but hasn't been able to part with him.

"He was incredibly spooky and when I tried him out he had been up for sale for three months," she says. "I couldn't stop him in trot, but there was something about him that caught my eye."

"By that December he had won his first dressage test. Last year I started to event him and in just a couple of outings he qualified for the British Riding Clubs BE80 Championships."

"We have now moved up to BE90 level and I would love for us to qualify for the Badminton Grassroots championships."

"TJ has always been consistent with his dressage scores – our average is 30."

"However, I've got to the point where I can't get the dressage scores any lower. We're kind of stuck, and you need to be in the low 20s to stand a chance of qualifying for the championships."

"I've never had a flatwork lesson on him before, and I would love someone to give me a push in the right direction."

Viv says one of the things she'd like to improve is TJ's canter.

"I find canter work tricky," she states. "I can get him soft and light in canter, but if I put my leg on to ask for more power, he just drops behind the bridle."

"It would be great to learn how to change or develop his canter."

Horse magazine arranged for Viv to have a lesson with Grand Prix dressage rider Alice Oppenheimer at her Hampshire base, to equip her with some tips to improve their performance in the future.

A tailored warm up

Alice tells Viv to warm up TJ as she would do at home. She is pleased to note that the rider is tailoring the warm-up to suit her horse's build.

"TJ is a compact horse, and because of this he will struggle with suppleness in the back," says Alice. "Viv is quite rightly including suppling lateral work in her warm-up."

"With a short-backed horse, if you do lateral work from the start it gets him working from behind and helps loosen his muscles."

"I have some short-coupled horses and I always get them going sideways on a long rein at the beginning of a schooling session, to supple up their back."

"Longer backed horses are easier to keep supple, but harder to keep straight."

Short-backed horses can struggle with suppleness



OUR EXPERT

Alice Oppenheimer



Alice is a Grand Prix Dressage rider based near Alton in Hampshire. She was a member of the 2009 Young Rider European team and has been placed internationally at Grand Prix level. Visit: www.aliceoppenheimer.com.

OUR RIDER

Viv Pearson



Viv has owned TJ, a seven-year-old, 15hh Welsh part-bred for 18 months. "His mum was a 13.2hh Welsh Section C and his dad was a 16hh cob," says Viv. "I bought him as a project horse to sell, but I like him so much I decided to keep him."

TIP from the TOP

A more active pace doesn't mean more speed – you want more power and expression in the trot or canter.



Encouraging a lighter feel

TJ is well established in his flatwork and round and soft in his outline. However, Alice suggests to improve their marks in the dressage arena, Viv should aim to change his balance so his poll is the highest point.

To be correct in dressage, you should be able to draw a vertical line down the front of the horse's face, but currently TJ's nose is behind this vertical line (see picture left).

Alice explains he is sitting behind the bridle. "I would like to see him come up more in his poll, which should result in your marks going up, too."

"Doing this requires the horse to take more weight behind in order to lift his front end and bring his ears up. We are changing his way of going, so he may find it difficult at first."

Alice asks Viv to begin in trot, with an active pace. "Then shorten your reins and carry your hands higher to encourage him to lift his shoulders and lighten his forehead," she says.

The trainer reminds Viv she should have a contact with her horse's mouth, but shouldn't be holding him up.

"Aim for an elastic feel on the mouth," she explains to the rider.

Alice encourages Viv to have her reins even shorter: "You want short reins and your hands forward – lift the bit in the corner of the mouth and encourage him to bring the ears up."

"When riding, if my elbows are slightly in front of the body, I know my reins are a good length."

"If the pace gets a bit quick, sit back with your upper body to slow him down." ►



Training

She also tells Viv it doesn't matter if TJ goes above the bit for the time being.

"Don't worry – that's how they learn," she reassures the rider.

Taking more weight behind

To help TJ bring his inside hindleg under and take more weight behind, Alice tells Viv to spiral



Viv spirals in and out on a circle to help TJ bring his inside leg under

in and out on a circle, in canter.

This exercise is also the first step towards creating a collected canter, as the horse has to sit back and 'wait' as he performs the spiralling.

"Use your upper body to ask him to wait," says Alice. "Bringing your upper body back will push more weight down through your seat bones. This in turn encourages the horse to lift through his shoulders.

"A horse will mirror what the rider does with their shoulders – if you round your shoulders, the horse will drop onto his forehand."

Next, Viv goes large to see if she can continue to control TJ's speed and rhythm in canter on a large circle.

"Make a half-halt to ask him to wait – only do it for a second, but this is the start to putting more manoeuvrability in the canter.

"That's better – now his ears are coming up, making his poll the highest point.

"Now, take your upper body back and ask him to wait for a few strides."

As TJ's canter is weakest on the right rein, Alice suggests Viv only works on bringing the pace back on that rein for now.

"His balance is getting better but if you ask for more power at this stage, you'll struggle to get him to collect again," she points out.

TIP from the TOP

Don't worry if your horse makes a mistake when you are schooling or even in a dressage test. Rebalance, and try again.



TJ's canter is stronger and better balanced on the left rein

Adapting the pace

TJ is stronger in canter on the left rein, but has too much inside bend and Alice tells Viv to keep him straighter in the neck.

"Put him on a large circle again and spiral in and on to a smaller circle and back out to the larger one," she continues.

"Use your upper body to prop him back on his hindlegs so he lightens in front.

"We need his ears more up, so shorten those reins and get your hands forward."

As the horse's canter is stronger and better balanced to the left, Alice encourages Viv to work on taking the pace forward as well as back.

After successfully riding TJ on and back in canter on the left rein, Viv goes large.

"That's the balance you want – the difference in his frame is only a couple of inches, but it does improve the overall picture," Alice states.



Viv uses her upper body to collect the pace

Lateral work

Alice suggests ending the session with some suppling lateral work and she shows Viv an easy way to teach a horse shoulder-in.

"For a dressage test, you are required to show inside flexion when performing shoulder-in, but when teaching a horse the movement, have his neck straight or with outside bend," Alice reveals.

"This makes it easier for the horse to understand he needs to bring his shoulder in.

"Lateral work is great for keeping horses more supple, and you have the added challenge of keeping the horse in a correct frame while

performing the different movements."

With leg-yield, Alice encourages Viv to think one step forward, and one step sideways.

"This will help you achieve better crossing steps and keep a more consistent outline," she advises.

"Well done," Alice praises.



Leg-yield is a great suppling exercise



When teaching shoulder-in, Alice advises keeping the neck straight

"He's really getting the idea now. Today you have refined his outline and put more power into his paces. This will help you with the jumping as well as the dressage."

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Gain confidence, gain control

OUR EXPERT

Lara Dyson



Dressage rider and Cyden Stallions owner Lara is based in Lincolnshire. She has won seven British Dressage regional titles and two National titles. A qualified coach, she runs Inspiring Minds, which helps riders improve their confidence.

OUR RIDER

Georgia Burrell



Georgia, 14, has owned 17-year-old, 16.3hh William for a year. Prior to this she rode a 13.2hh pony. Georgia says part-Clydesdale William can be strong in unfamiliar surroundings: "He can be a tank at times, but does always stop."



Lara helps Georgia to relax and to improve her riding position

Coach and dressage rider Lara Dyson inspires a young rider to improve her confidence in the saddle and gain better control of her horse

1 Learning to relax

Before even asking Georgia to get on William, Lara talks the rider through an exercise to help deal with her nerves and confidence issues.

Using a calming method from her Inspiring Minds coaching techniques, Lara shows Georgia how to centre her inner core.

Lara puts her hand on Georgia's shoulder and asks her to place her own hands on her belly button and send her negative thoughts down to centre her core.

After three attempts at the exercise, Lara says she can feel Georgia is standing up straighter and has become stronger in her body.

"Taking all your stress down to your belly button helps you to relax and feel strong through your core," Lara explains.

Georgia says she immediately feels less nervous than usual about getting on William and is visibly relaxed.



Georgia focuses on becoming relaxed and stress-free

2 Riding from leg to hand

Lara asks Georgia to walk William on a 20-metre circle, concentrating on keeping her legs loose and down – Georgia has a tendency to ride with her legs too far back.

Lara wants to help the rider gain control by going back to basics.

She encourages Georgia to use her inside leg to push William into her outside hand, and vice versa. The exercise she asks the rider to perform is to spiral in and out on the circle.

"Turn the palms of your hands out to help keep your arms more relaxed," advises Lara. "I want you

to develop more of a feel through the rein, rather than simply holding them and having a contact.

"Think of holding a piece of elastic and adjust your rein accordingly to move with William so you are always in contact with him but not fixed and rigid."

As Georgia relaxes, Lara tells her 'disengaging' William's hindquarters – as she has been by 'leg yielding' on the circle – will slow him down.

"By taking control of the hindquarters and moving his hindlegs to the inside of the circle, and then the outside, he will immediately have to slow down," she explains.



Spiralling in and out of a circle teaches you to ride from leg to hand. Inset: turning the palms out to keep the arms relaxed



5 confidence-boosting tips

As someone who nearly gave up riding due to competition nerves, Lara has developed coping mechanisms to help her deal with situations and prevent nerves from affecting her performance.

- Before getting into the saddle, focus on your belly button and force all your nervous energy down and out.
- Take deep breaths and stay in the present – try not to let negative thoughts distract your mind.
- Keep legs loose and relaxed at all times, and remember to maintain a correct riding position.
- Visualise yourself in the competition arena or out on a hack without feeling nervous or anxious. The brain is exceptionally powerful, so aim to trick it into believing you are confident.
- Remember the basics and keep brushing up on them – practice makes perfect – and don't push yourself beyond your limits.

3 Correcting corners

Moving into trot, Georgia says that William is more relaxed than usual – so much so, Lara now wants the horse going forward with more impulsion.

Lara moves Georgia's rein onto the snaffle ring of the bit, and says she wants to encourage more momentum from William.

Sending the pair back around the arena, Lara asks Georgia to ride her corners correctly.

"A common problem with inexperienced riders is they allow their horse to fall in on the corners," says Lara. "Use your inside leg to push William into the corners, rather than allowing him to take charge and move around the arena in the manner he wants to.

"Just by thinking about riding into the corners, your body will naturally work in a way to help make this happen. Always try and think through a movement and develop a feel for the stages required to get you to the end result." ▶



Georgia allows William to cut the corners

Training

William goes forward with bigger trot strides



4 Turning with the hands

As Georgia continues to trot large around the arena, Lara reminds her to make sure her legs don't fall too far back on William's sides.

"Another tweak we need to make to your riding position is that the steering should come from your hands, which should be positioned just above the pommel of the saddle," Lara adds. "Currently, you are using your shoulders too much."

Bringing them back to a walk, Lara demonstrates – using her hand – how William

should respond to Georgia's leg. Lara pushes the horse sideways so the rider can feel the horse move laterally underneath her.

"Keep your reins level and don't allow the inside hand to cross over William's neck," Lara reminds Georgia when she's back on a circle in trot.

"That's great – we are starting to see some real improvement and William is moving with a much bigger stride. He's moving more freely and still maintaining relaxation."

Working on a bigger circle helps William keep his balance in canter



5 Moving on to canter

When Georgia asks William to canter on a 20-metre circle, he becomes heavy in the rider's hand and looks to the outside, losing the correct bend.

Lara wants Georgia to get William more forward, while keeping her inside leg behind the girth to offer him support. This results in the horse becoming unbalanced and falling back

into trot, so Lara tells Georgia to move out onto a bigger circle to give him more space and time to correct and maintain his balance.

As William becomes softer in his outline, Lara encourages Georgia to maintain a consistent contact, sit light in the saddle and allow him to move forward in a rhythm.

They are soon cantering around the arena in an easy, relaxed manner.

6 Learning not to lean

During the lesson, it becomes evident that William has a tendency to lean on the rider's hands, and Georgia has mistakenly interpreted this as the horse being strong.

"Take a pull and then let go," advises Lara. "If you constantly pull on a horse's mouth, he will just lean even more."

"Rather than relying on your hands too much, use your body to ask him to come back to you – take your shoulders and your weight back."

"Then put your leg on to ask for more impulsion and squeeze the rein to ask him to come rounder."

"This should result in him going forward with energy into a more relaxed contact."

Georgia practises squeezing the rein to ask William to come rounder



William is carrying himself, rather than leaning on Georgia's hands



Contact info

You can find out more about Lara and Cyden Stallions at www.cydendressage.com; tel (07920) 452 739. Or, like the Cyden Dressage facebook page for news of all three Cyden Stallions and other horses and ponies for sale.

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Ditch the spooks

A nervous or spooky horse can test the patience of anyone. But gain his confidence and you could find he's your perfect partner says **Michelle Parkyn**

Spooky horses need thoughtful riding. It can often feel like you're treading on eggshells, where any small distraction can cause a big overreaction.

Some horses tend to be more nervous due to their breeding or it could be down to past experiences or riders.

However, it is always worth checking they aren't using spooking as an evasion to get out of work, due to a physical limitation or soreness.

If he always shies when you ask for lateral work, for example, there may be an underlying issue that makes it difficult for him to carry out that particular movement.

Once you know there's no physical cause, you can set a training programme, which will start to overcome his tension.

You also need to get to know your horse's moods. Don't mistake playfulness and alertness for nerves.

Confident horses enjoy their work and that little bit of sharpness can enhance performance, if channelled in the right way.

Build a partnership

Many horses retain their natural fright and flight mentality, so it's important to build a strong partnership with a nervous horse.

He needs to feel you won't put him in a position of stress or danger. This way he will look to you for comfort and security.

Spend plenty of time with him on the ground and use your voice so he becomes used to it.

Repeat the same voice aids when leading him as you use when riding. That way, using a 'whoa' when you're schooling will be familiar and comforting to him, as he will relate it to your groundwork sessions.

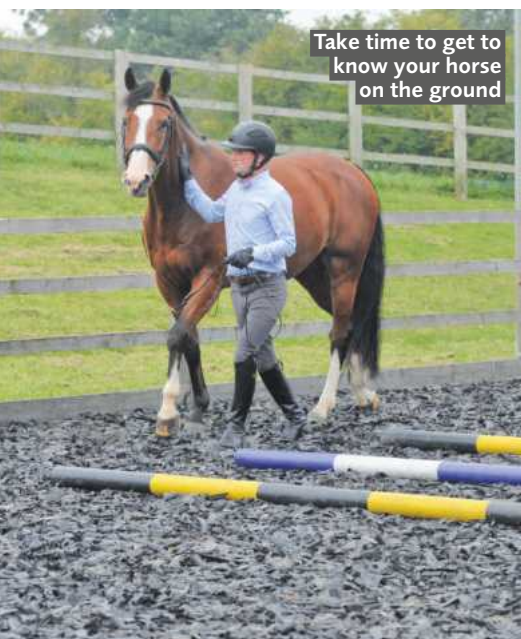
If you are taking your nervous horse to a new venue, get there in plenty of time and lead him around until he settles.

Let him see as much as you can with you next to him, before you add in the pressure of a performance.

Prepare him for new things he may see at an event by introducing him to scary objects like



Photos: Jo Prestwich



umbrellas, flags or bikes in the comfort of his usual surroundings, in a gradual manner.

Keep him busy

Often a nervous horse will have his mind half on the job and half on the 'monsters' across the school. The best way to get him to settle is to keep him busy.

Plan your riding sessions to include a range of school figures, including serpentines, shallow loops, figures of eight and reverse half circles.

You should also introduce plenty of transitions to keep him attentive.

Variation means he has to listen to your aids in order to carry out the movements.



TIP from the TOP

If your horse is nervous he may be running on adrenaline. Be careful not to work him too long, or he may stop using himself correctly.

As a result he should start to worry less.

Drilling a horse can sometimes produce spookiness, as he will find ways of evading the rider's aids.

You may find after riding a circle too many times, the horse starts to shy and loses the quality of work at the same spot, each time he passes it.

Typically a horse will back off or shy on the one part of a circle where he feels unbalanced or stiff.

This can be mistaken for spookiness, but can be avoided by smart riding. For example, try riding one 10m circle in each corner of the school rather than riding four 10m circles in one spot.

Find something familiar

In order to build your horse's confidence, work out what he is good at and start with that during your schooling sessions.

If he settles more quickly in canter, introduce it earlier, once he has warmed up, so he can feel comfortable with what you're asking of him.

An exercise that often builds confidence is to ride a large figure of eight, with a transition as you change the rein.

Ride the movement in trot, coming to walk in the centre (for three to four strides) then proceed in trot in the new direction.

Once you've ridden the movement a few times he will start to anticipate both the transition and the change of direction.

Rewarding his attempts will help him to feel confident he understands what you are asking of him.

Don't over-face him by introducing new movements too quickly. You need to have a phased approach with a nervous horse so he can remain calm and relaxed.

Try to break down the movement into parts and teach him each element in turn.

For example, when teaching him to canter across the diagonal, with a change of lead through trot, practise each element separately ►

Introduce your horse to scary objects at home



If your horse becomes tense take a step back in his training

before you begin to link them together. Be prepared to take a step backwards if he becomes tense at any stage. Here's how:

- Turn across the diagonal from H to F in canter, and make a transition to trot at X;
- Next time, come across the diagonal in trot and ask for canter on the right lead, just before F;
- Then come across the diagonal in canter, trot at X and pick up right canter before F;
- Finally, when he's feeling confident, ride the transitions quicker, with only a few strides of trot at X.

TIP from the TOP

Don't focus on what your horse is spooking at. Stay focused, confident and clear in your aids to give him confidence.

Ride smart

Once you have done everything you can to set your horse up for success it's important you ride him positively.

If he starts to spook at something, don't be tempted to take your legs off. Instead, you need to keep your aids on and ride him positively forward.

If he keeps spooking at a monster in one

TIP from the TOP

Don't focus on the 'monsters' your horse is looking at. If you wait for something scary to happen your horse will follow suit.

corner of the school, be ready for him next time you approach that spot.

Keep him flexed to the inside and ride a few steps of leg-yield into the corner so you are getting him to step away from your inside leg while remaining forward. Reward him for even the smallest improvement.

You can also keep him listening and soft to the contact by asking for counter flexion to the outside for short periods, before straightening him and then asking for inside flexion.

Don't be tempted to keep working a nervous horse until he tires in order to settle him.

Instead, try improving the quality of his work in more intense, shorter session and reward his attention by finishing before he gets fatigued.

A tired horse can become stiff the next day, and this certainly won't help settle his nerves if he feels some muscle tightness along with all his other concerns.

Once you can gain your horse's trust you can start to channel his nervous energy into productive work, so it's worth spending the time making that connection. ■



Flex your horse to the inside and leg-yield to the spooking object



Then ride your horse straight for a few strides...



...before asking him for counter flexion



Always ride a spooky horse positively

A-Z TRAINING

J IS FOR... JUMPING

Jumping exercises can be adapted for all levels of horse and rider. Here are some great ideas to inspire you

Whether you wish to take part in showjumping competitions or just want to have fun at home, incorporating fences into your schooling sessions from time to time can improve any horse's way of going.

Jumping provides variety to training and can help make a horse more foot-sure; it will enhance his athletic ability and keep him mentally interested in his work.

Many riders struggle with nerves when it comes to jumping, but you don't need to use big fences or tricky combinations to make a difference.

Keep things simple and within your comfort zone to build up your confidence and spice up any schooling session. Your horse will love it, too.

Jump around

Next time you're in the school, set out a couple of low cross-poles – or start with poles on the ground placed between two wings, if you prefer.

You can position the fences wherever you like in the arena, but make sure you allow enough space to ride around the outside of the wings.

Ride around the fences as part of your warm-up, so you familiarise your horse with the obstacles.

When you're fully warmed up, trot over the poles or cross-poles in both directions and then do the same in canter.

In between jumping, go back to your flatwork schooling but incorporate the jumps again whenever you wish.

A good time to pop over the jumps is when your horse is lacking impulsion on the flat – the jumps will help to get his energy levels back up.

DID you KNOW

The safer you are in the saddle, the more confident you will feel. To help keep you secure, fit a neckstrap and wear a body protector or air jacket.



Jumping can make schooling sessions much more fun

GREAT GRIDWORK

If you're keen to do more jumping, gridwork is a great way to improve a horse's balance and rhythm.

- Start by placing a ground pole 8ft (2.45m) before a small cross-pole. Approach in trot a few times, until your horse is jumping happily over the fence.

- Next, place a second pole 11ft (3.35m) after the fence. The idea is the horse lands over the fence in canter and the second pole will help him to rebalance.

- Remove the pole after the fence and add in a second cross-pole

set 18ft (5.5m) away from the first fence. This is a one-canter-stride distance, so when you land after the first fence, your horse should perform one canter stride before taking off over the second fence.

- Add a third fence another canter stride away from the second one and place a pole 11ft (3.35m) after the final fence, to help with balance.

- If you're riding in a large enough area, position your grid so you have room to approach on both reins. Distances may vary depending on the horse's stride length.

Gridwork is a great way to improve balance and rhythm



Q&A

TRAINING

OUR EXPERTS



MICHAEL PEACE

Specialist trainer Michael works with young and problem horses. His 'Think Equus' approach helps owners build a better bond with their horse.



DAVID DOEL

David is an international event rider, based in Wiltshire. He has represented Great Britain at junior and young rider level, winning team silver and bronze and individual bronze.



SARA-JANE LANNING

Sara-Jane is an advanced dressage rider, List one dressage judge and a freelance trainer. Her two top horses are Try Me Once and Mi Amigo.

Have a go!

Q My instructor said I should have a go at a walk and trot test with my Irish-bred gelding, but I am nervous about showing myself up. Will lots of people watch me and be critical if I do a bad test?

Name and address withheld

SARA-JANE SAYS There is no need to compete if you don't want to, but you might surprise yourself and find you enjoy it!

Some competitors watch a couple of other riders before their own test, but they are not judging you and will probably be trying to learn the test themselves.

Everybody has to start somewhere and we all make mistakes. If it goes wrong, keep calm and move on to the next movement.

It is just one mark, and the important thing is to keep going and not let a problem drag on to the next movement.

The good thing about dressage is a mistake doesn't mean it's game over, unlike showjumping.

Dressage is fun – and addictive!



You can still be the winner with a mistake, if the rest of your test is good.

Walk and trot (Intro) tests are designed for people like you, who are starting out. Go for it and have fun, I bet you will be back!

How do I ride straight lines?

Q My young warmblood is wiggly when I ride down the centre line. I also struggle to keep him in the arena if there are dressage boards instead of a fence. How can I solve this?

Phoebe Harrold, by email

Practise riding off the track



SARA-JANE SAYS Try to avoid riding on the outside track of the arena.

Riding on an inner track – a metre or two in from the edge – is difficult at first, but it will teach you to ride your horse between both legs and reins.

A larger arena makes this easier than a 20m X 40m school, but get in the habit of not always being glued to the edge.

Try putting a few poles down as a guide. Use around three poles in a short arena or five in a long arena and ride a straight line to the inside of them.

You will realise how much you rely on the wall or fence to keep you straight. Make sure when you get to the corners you ask the horse to turn, without relying on the fence to turn you.

Or, mark out a rough arena in a field and leave the security of a fenced arena.

When I was starting out, I simply mowed a line around the edge of a field and a centre line and practised that way.

Why does he fall in?



Lifting your inside hand can help create a better balanced circle

Q When I am schooling, my young horse falls in on the right rein. My instructor has told me to use more inside leg to keep her out, but I still can't do it. Can you help?

Belinda Richards, by email

MICHAEL SAYS Often, we are taught to loosen the inside rein and use more inside leg to keep our horses out on the track or a circle.

However, as soon as we loosen the inside rein, we allow the horse's balance to fall to the inside.

Until a horse is straighter, he needs a little extra help from us to show him what we want.

When your horse falls in, raise your inside hand slightly to take the weight off his inside foreleg.

This frees up his leg so it can lift off the ground more easily, resulting in a better-balanced circle.

If he still falls in, create more space for the outside shoulder by opening the outside rein.

The decision of whether you had a refusal is down to the fence judge



Photo: www.shutterstock.com/Olganu79

What is a cross-country refusal?

Q What are the rules regarding refusals when going cross-country? Does the horse have to keep moving forward? If he stops and then jumps the fence, is that OK?

Tanya King, by email

DAVID SAYS One of the things I always take to competitions is British Eventing's (BE) rule book.

It is available for all to look at online, and is well worth a read. If you are competing at an unaffiliated event, it could be run under Pony Club or Riding Club rules, so find out which.

BE states if the fence is above 30cm and your horse stops, it is a refusal, even if he jumps after you have given him 'encouragement'.

Lower than 30cm, you may be forgiven if the horse hesitates and then jumps, as it is considered safe to jump this height from a standstill.

The decision of whether or not you have a refusal is down to the fence judge. Many fence judges are volunteers who may or may not have experience of this sort of problem.

They have to make up their mind in a very short space of time, with no action replays (except in a few top-level competitions).

If you feel you have been wrongly judged, check the scoreboard to make sure it is not happening to fellow competitors at the same fence – it could be a spot of over-zealous judging.

In this case, a quiet word with the competition organiser is the best course of action. They may then take it up with the fence judge, if they feel they need to.

Remember, there is always another day. Be glad you got round safely and remember to kick a bit harder next time you get to a similar fence!

How can I improve our canter?

Q My mare is reluctant to go into canter. My instructor says I am blocking her with my hands during the transition. What can I do to stop this?

Ella Robinson, Ripon, North Yorks

SARA-JANE SAYS Check whether the early Scales of Training are all in place. These are rhythm, suppleness, contact and impulsion.

When these basics are correct, put her onto a circle and prepare the transition. Go into sitting trot for a few strides and put your inside leg at the girth and outside leg back.

Ensure she has a little flexion towards the leg you want her to strike off on, but not so much she falls out through her shoulder.

Then ask for canter. Help her with your voice to start with.



Preparation is the key to a good canter transition

Keep your hands soft and still. You can try holding on to a neck strap or the mane to stop you blocking with your hands.

Don't throw everything at her all at once – get a correct trot first, then prepare, then ask.

Help me solve his napping

Q My horse has always been a bit nappy when I hack him on his own, but recently he's started rearing.

I'm too frightened to take him out without another horse. What can I do?

Name and address withheld

MICHAEL SAYS Horses will rear for a number of reasons, and it is our job to identify the cause.

Once you've checked he has no physical problems and all his tack fits him comfortably, try to see things from your horse's point of view.

It's likely he is worried about going out alone and finds it stressful without his mates

Build confidence by setting up challenges at home



there for security. Therefore, he needs your reassurance to help him overcome his fears.

Rather than asking him to leave the yard for now, set up some challenges in the arena to build his confidence.

Place some spooky objects for him to walk over, through, or even under. Ask him to deal with the challenges in-hand at first, if you feel safer.

When you do hack out, go with a friend and ask your horse to take the lead from time to time. Allow him enough rein contact to move forward freely and reward any effort he makes with a big pat.

Safety is a priority for both of you, so try to avoid putting yourself in a position to fail.

It's OK to get off and lead your horse past something he's scared of. It's much better to do this than risk another rearing episode.

If you build up his confidence slowly, but surely, you should be able to happily hack him out alone.

If not, I suggest enlisting help from a well-respected horse trainer.

Q&A

TRAINING

OUR EXPERTS



STEPHANIE SOSKIN

Steph is a BHSII who is experienced in running yards. She competes regularly in showing and is the author of *What Not to Wear on a Horse*.



MICHELLE PARKYN

Michelle is a freelance dressage trainer and rider based in north Shropshire. She teaches riders of all levels, from beginner to advanced.



ALISON KENWARD

Alison is a trainer and rider based at Solitaire Dressage in Warwickshire. She is a qualified coach and teaches riders of all levels, on the flat and over fences.

Photo: Flair Photography

Are there tunes to avoid?

Q For dressage to music classes, are there tracks that might put the judges off? Will they give lower marks if my music tastes are different to theirs?

Sheila Griffiths, Swansea

ALISON SAYS Music classes were created to showcase the horse and rider and allow them to perform to a soundtrack that enhances their dressage performance.

The purpose of the music, aside from being fun to ride to, is to engage the audience, capture their imagination and provide a background to show your level of training and highlight your partnership's strengths.

Music with a great harmony and sense of connection to the partnership is destined to earn good marks.

Dressage judges are trained to not judge the artistic performance based on their personal musical preferences.

Riders have a blank canvas and score sheet, so to speak, but remember that music you love listening to may not work as music to ride to.

It might not match your horse's natural rhythm, or it could have too varied or complex a beat to match his paces.

I believe horses have musical preferences too, so ride to lots of different styles and you will know when he likes it as it will feel easy.

Improving a weaker rein



Introduce new exercises on the stronger rein

Q My horse is stiffer to the left than the right. What's the best way to address this?

Bea Hicks, Guildford, Surrey

ALISON SAYS All horses are one-sided, but you need to rule out any physical problems – assess tack fit, any muscle or foot imbalance and book a dental check.

Make sure you are not carrying any old injuries that may affect your posture. Sometimes, riding a crooked horse can make a rider crooked, and vice versa.

When you introduce new exercises, begin on the easy rein and repeat once or twice before changing to the stiffer rein.

Exercises to improve suppleness include circles, loops and serpentines, as well as straight line work away from the fence.

Slightly positioning your horse to the inside on these straight lines is the foundation for teaching shoulder fore, which is a great supplying exercise.

Early lateral work, such as turn about the forehand and simple leg-yield, helps to develop suppleness and symmetry.

You can introduce shoulder-in, in trot, and simple counter canter exercises over time.

Be patient as it will take several weeks – or months – to achieve your goals.

Returning from box rest

Q My horse has been on box rest for three months after a nasty injury in the field. He's sound and I've got the vet's OK to ride him, but how do I reintroduce schooling work?

Margaret Field, by email

MICHELLE SAYS You need to take things slowly. Plan a six to eight week programme, with the aim of having him back into regular work by the end of that time.

Although physically he's had the all-clear from the vet, he will have lost some muscle strength, suppleness and fitness in the time he's been off, so start with in-hand work, to gently loosen his muscles.

Ask him to do some turns on the forehand, leg-yield and rein back on the ground.

When you get back on board, be strict about how long you ride for. Start out with 20-minute sessions, mostly at walk, and build up the time and content week by week.

Set yourself some exercises to keep it interesting – for example, walk your way through a dressage test, or set up some markers or poles to ride around.

Think about getting him supple by riding plenty of serpentines, figures of eight and loops – but all in walk to being with.

When you start trot and canter work, stay on large circles and straight lines to begin with, avoiding any tight turns that may put pressure on the site of injury.

Going for short hacks with some gradual hill work will help boost strength and encourage natural balance.

Hacking encourages natural balance





Improving the free walk

Q My pony always jogs at the end of the free walk on a long rein in a dressage test. How can I avoid this?

Lucy Robinson, by email

STEPHANIE SAYS This is often due to the horse anticipating trot or the rider tensing as they shorten the reins.

After trot or canter work, establish walk with a contact and then lengthen your reins slowly. Encourage the pony to stretch and use your voice to reinforce the command.

On a long rein, ask for halt. Then walk on again, before shortening the reins. This will avoid your pony anticipating what is coming next.

If he jogs – use your voice and firmly and calmly say “no, walk”.

Variations of pace can be used with long and shorter reins in an enclosed area. This will build up trust and keep him thinking.

Make sure you sit tall and soft, breathe and relax into the transitions. And don't forget to smile – it helps!

TIP from the TOP

Check self-carriage by pushing your hands forward for a few strides. If you are holding the horse together, he will change outline or balance.

Your warm-up doesn't need to be a set time

How long should I warm-up for?

Q Before a dressage test, I usually ride my horse in for about 10 minutes, but I've noticed other riders do half an hour or more. What should I be aiming for?

Nicola Hale, Manchester

MICHELLE SAYS To prepare for any activity your horse needs to have a suitable mental warm-up and physical stretching phase.

It doesn't need to be a set time, but you should start with 10 minutes of walk before you progress to your pre-test exercises, which will get him ready for the moves you are about to perform.

This would usually include a stretch phrase in trot and canter before you enter the arena.

You need to check your horse is ready and listening to your aids on both reins and that he is moving forward, softly.

Getting to this point will vary, depending on the combination, the level of competition, how much work your horse is in and the temperament of horse and rider.

The more events you go to, the more you can fine-tune your warm up, but remember to do your own thing. Don't feel like you need to keep going just because others do.

Encourage your horse to stretch down into the long contact



British Dressage offers something for every rider



Should I affiliate?

Q Is it worth joining British Dressage if I don't have any aspirations to compete above Novice level?

Heather Long, by email

ALISON SAYS British Dressage (BD) has introduced several new membership types and a new competition structure.

Take a look at the training and social events listed on regional calendars and you will realise how much is going on.

I recommend going to a 'Have a Go Dressage Day', which are run by regional groups and offer test riding training and a chance to meet others competing in dressage across the levels.

You might also enjoy going to some of the evening events where judges reveal what they are looking for.

Regional dressage camps offer great value and are packed with training sessions, workshops and socialising.

On the competition front the new structure allows riders to stay at the level they are happy competing at, as well as offering qualification pathways for those that would like to aim for Area Festivals or Regionals.

Team Quest competitions offer the chance to compete as a team and there are regional team competitions, too, if you get the bug.

There is even a membership category for novice combinations to compete in music classes.

Above all, by joining BD you get the chance to ride in front of judges who have been through rigorous training programmes to enable them to give feedback on each horse and rider combination, as they perform on the day.

"We never gave up on Dez"

After being dumped to die on a quiet lane, Dez the coloured pony's luck changed when he was taken into the care of a local yard



Dez's condition belies his difficult start in life

Watching a cheeky coloured youngster kicking his heels up in the paddock, full of energy and life, it's hard to believe this is a pony that was at death's door a few months ago.

Little 'Dez' is lucky to be alive after being dumped to die as a foal, abandoned in the layby of a quiet lane, where few people would venture on a foggy, cold winter's night.

His luck turned when his eyes glowed in the beam of a car's headlight, and the occupants called the police.

And his fate was sealed when the police made a call to a local yard, informing them that one of 'their' horses had got out.

The person who took the call was Lauren Dracott, who runs Weybridge Equestrian Centre in Surrey with her mum, Beverley Firth.

"The phone rang in my mum's house – she was out and it was just by chance that I'd popped in," remembers Lauren, who lives next door.

"It was the police, who told me there was a horse out. Worried it was one of ours, I jumped in the car with my brother and I called Mum, who said she'd come home."

The police hadn't been able to find the 'escapee' themselves, so didn't give Lauren an exact location to search.

"I ran up and down the main road, checking the fencing, but couldn't see anything amiss," she says. "Before giving up, I thought I'd go and have a look down the lane to Desborough Island [a man-made lake in the River Thames] and that's where I found Dez."

"Another lady in a car had spotted him, and was trying to get hold of the RSPCA, but couldn't get through."

Lauren says the foal was lying in a muddy lay-by and looked barely alive.

"He was a pitiful little thing – his coat was matted and dirty and he was shivering. It was so cold that night, and foggy, too."

Lauren made a quick decision to take the pony back to the yard, and sent her brother to fetch the horsebox."

Rescue mission

With the help of members of nearby Weybridge Pistol and Gun Club, the pony was carefully lifted into the lorry.

"He was skin and bone, but a dead weight, so still quite heavy," says Lauren, who admits that in hindsight it was a risky decision taking the foal to their livery yard and riding school.

"He could have had a virus or been carrying a disease, but we couldn't just leave him there," she reasons.

"Back at the yard we put him in a stable and offered him some water and hay, and I was so pleased when he started eating. I took it as a positive sign."

"However, I was also expecting that he would stand up once he'd defrosted and got some food inside him, but he was still down in the morning."



"We put a call in to our vets – Shotter and Byers – first thing, and one of the things we feared as we waited for someone to arrive was that he had a broken leg."

What the vet did find was the pony had worryingly high temperature and heart rates. His coat was riddled with lice.

"He was given supportive care, including vitamin injections to give him a boost, but at that stage it was difficult to tell what was wrong, and whether the foal would make it," says Lauren.

It was clear the pony's life was in the balance, but Lauren said she was committed to do what she could to help him.

"I never even thought about putting him down," she reveals. "I felt he deserved so much better and he had this look in his eye – despite having been badly neglected, he trusted us and wasn't scared of us."



"It was a pitiful sight – his coat was matted and dirty, and he was shivering"

"I think he was so grateful for our help and he would give a little whinny when we came out to the stable."

Lauren decided to name the little foal, and came up with 'Dez', after the island where he was found.

Hospital referral

Dez had a daily vet visit but at the end of the first week, his heart rate and temperature were still high and he hadn't been able to stand.

"He would try to get up, but he just didn't have the strength," says Lauren.

A decision was made to refer Dez to the Royal Veterinary College (RVC) in Potters Bar, Hertfordshire, where he could receive round-the-clock, specialist care.

"As well as highly trained staff, the vet hospital had special matting for him to lie on and a hoist to lift him to his feet," says Lauren.

"The care he received was second to none and we had a brilliant vet – Sarah Smith – who was upbeat and positive and kept us informed of Dez's progress."

"They would lift him to his feet every 24-hours – he was supported by the hoist initially, with the aim that Dez would stand by himself."

"One day we got a phone call to tell us the brilliant news that he'd stood for a couple of minutes. Then, a bit later the phone rang again and we were told Dez had been on his feet for half an hour."

"The next day, Sarah called to tell us he'd stood up again. I asked how long for, and she replied 'He's still standing!' It was a real milestone."

Dez spent a total of six weeks at the RVC, clocking up bills of around £5,500. ▶

The family think Dez could excel in showing



Meanwhile news of Dez had spread via Facebook, where Lauren's postings on the *Surrey Horse & Pony* page had resulted in an outpouring of support for the battling foal.

When members of the page offered donations towards Dez's care and treatment, Lauren – after careful consideration – decided to take them up on their offer.

"Because myself and my family had rescued Dez, I felt he was our responsibility, but the vet bills were running into thousands," she says. "I had so many people offering to help out that I set up a Go Fund Me account called 'Dez the lucky pony', and the donations came flooding in.

"Lots of people were paying £10 or £20, but others were pledging £200. It was incredible how supportive everyone was, and we didn't have one negative comment.

"We also had some money donated by the local gun club, whose members helped us the night Dez was found, and someone organised a raffle at a local tack sale."

In total, the Go Fund Me page raised £5,600. And with so many people keen to follow the foal's progress, he soon had his own Facebook page.

Turning a corner

Back home from the RVC, Dez made positive progress, although Lauren says not everything ran smoothly and there were several setbacks in the weeks that followed.

"Dez suffered from bad sores as he was still spending a large amount of time lying down," says Lauren. "They were like bed sores."

We put tights over his legs, to protect them and help prevent them getting infected.

"I also modified one of my dad's fleece jumpers to protect his sores and allow them to heal – Dez's legs went through the arms, and I zipped it up under his chest!

"At one point, Dez's hock swelled up and he was hopping lame, and his heart rate went up again. The high heart rate was something we never got to the bottom of."

Lauren's mum, Beverley, said the hock issue was a worrying time.

"Dez could hardly walk," she recalls. "But, luckily, he pulled through and from that point he quickly became stronger and stronger."

A weigh-in performed by TopSpec, which donated some food to Dez, found he was gaining

weight. "When Dez was first weighed, at the RVC, he was 97kg," says Beverley.

"He went up to 116kg and from there to a much healthier 136kg.

"Obviously, there are health issues associated with a horse putting on weight too quickly, so we had to monitor his diet carefully and control what he was eating."

Despite the foal having been so poorly when they found him, Lauren says she always felt Dez would pull through. Mum Beverley, however, admits to having concerns.

"When we lifted him into the lorry that night, he was so poorly that I didn't think he would make it," says Beverley.

Dez has a home for life with Lauren and Beverley





"He is such a special pony"

"I have nightmares that I didn't get the phone call – he wouldn't have survived the night"

"The vets were guarded in their prognosis but said it was positive that Dez was so young. An older horse couldn't have been down for so long as it would have caused internal injuries."

Dez, who was gelded earlier this year, now looks a picture of health and has a huge personality. The youngster has an army of fans and on a trip to a local show, Lauren was inundated with requests from those keen to meet him.

Lauren is now Dez's legal owner, having gone through the correct channels to claim ownership, and has had him passported and microchipped.

"My worst fear was that someone would come forward and try to claim him," Lauren says. "What if someone claimed that he had escaped from

their field? However, we can't see that it was anything other than a case of being dumped to die. He was in such a state and couldn't even stand, so how could he have walked there?"

Beverley says she recalls seeing a white van leaving Desborough Island earlier in the evening when Dez was found.

"I have been talking to the police and the local council about getting CCTV installed down the lane," she says. "The police have been very helpful and they love coming to see Dez and find out how he is doing."

The Firths are adamant that little Dez has a home for life.

"He is such a special pony and we just adore him," says Lauren. "He is the star of the yard and he loves getting attention and being fussed. I got married last month and Dez was the guest of honour!"

"He is nosy and cheeky, but generally well behaved. When we took him to the show, he had better manners than the grown up horses and ponies!"

"He has been handled regularly since he was found, so he's used to people."

"We are so grateful to all of the people who donated money to help save his life, and he wouldn't be here today without the amazing care and treatment he received from Shotter & Byers and the team at the RVC."

Lauren and Beverley, who are showing fans, think Dez will grow in height to around 14.2hh and believe he could have what it takes to catch the judge's eye.

"It would be lovely to show Dez and maybe qualify him for a big championship, such as Horse

A recurring problem

Just weeks after Dez's rescue, another grim discovery was made along the same stretch of road.

"We were alerted to a dead horse on the island," says Beverley. "We went down immediately, and the body was around the corner from where Dez was found."

"It looked like it had been pushed down a set of stone steps and from what we saw, we believe the horse was alive when it was dumped."

Beverley and Lauren made many phone calls trying to find someone to take responsibility and remove the carcass, which had already been there for several days.

"The land belongs to the council and the water board, so we contacted them to ask them to do something," continues Lauren. "The body was decomposing and stank – this is an area where people walk their dogs and little kids play."

"We also wanted someone to do the right thing for that poor horse."

Lauren and Beverley finally took matters into their own hands and arranged for a licenced company to remove the body. The Firths and some supporters chipped in to pay the bill.

"CCTV is needed to prevent this happening, or to catch the people dumping the horses," adds Beverley.



of the year Show," says Lauren. "He has a quality head, and moves well."

One thing Lauren is sure of, and that is he has a home for life.

She still thinks that the pony remembers the terrible night when he was left for dead.

"He hates rain, and I'm sure it brings back memories of being so wet and cold," Lauren states. "I am so glad the police called us and that we were able to help him."

"I have nightmares about that phone call. What if I'd not been there and we picked up an answerphone message the next day, when it would have been too late?"

"He wouldn't have survived the night in the layby in those conditions – he wouldn't have stood a chance." ■



Lauren and Dez have a close bond

Play as you go

Once viewed as an elitist sport, polo is becoming more accessible – and more affordable – to the masses. Hazel Southam travelled to the New Forest to find out more

Polo may be the sport of kings – photographers regularly snap Princes William and Harry while they're playing. But it is becoming more affordable to ordinary riders on everyday salaries and has never been more popular.

In the heart of the New Forest, a riding school is aiming to bring polo to the masses.

Set up by former showjumper Jason Coupe and chairman of the New Forest Polo Club, Roger White, the New Forest Polo School wants to brush away the elitist image of the sport and get people on normal incomes into the game. It is seeing early successes.

The school opened its doors in January, offering discounted lessons to polo novices through the online firm Groupon.

So far, more than 170 people have had lessons through the scheme – many have signed up for further, regular tuition and some have even started playing competitively.

"The uptake has been phenomenal," says Jason. "A lot of people don't know that polo exists at anything other than the 'Formula one' level. They love the fact that they can come and have some fun without doing all the work."

An adrenaline rush

The school has offered hour-long lessons through Groupon for £20. After that, clients are encouraged to do an introduction to polo consisting of five hour-long lessons that cover everything from riding skills to stick techniques.

The aim, says Jason, is that after the £195 course is completed, players will be ready to play their first chukkas.

So, on a breezy, drizzly summer day, someone doing just that is 35-year-old vet's receptionist, Sarah Morton.

"Riding is in my blood," says Sarah, who first sat on



Jason wants to help more people enjoy the sport of polo

Photography: David Miller

a horse aged just six months. But since she gave up mounted games in her twenties she says she has "been in limbo".

"I had always thought that polo was amazing, but I thought I could never do it as you had to have your own ponies and because of the money involved."

She had two lessons through the Groupon offer and has signed up for the five-lesson plan.

"I saw it could be affordable to everybody," says Sarah, who earns £15,000 a year.

"As soon as I got on a polo pony I knew it was for me. The horses are sharp and quick. They are supremely talented and well-trained. They are amazing."

"When I did mounted games, I loved going at a million miles an hour," she says. "Polo is a similar adrenaline rush."

Today, however, she's taking it a little bit steadier on her favourite steed, Draco. Jason leads her out onto the pitch and they practise hitting the ball into the goal at walk.

Jason's wife, Sarah, who is also new to polo, takes Sarah Morton to one side and they practise riding off, where riders vie for the ball by pushing each other out of the way with their horses.

The two Sarahs practise 'riding off'



Then a scratch team of grooms, Jason and the two Sarahs start hitting the ball to each other.

Initially, Sarah Morton rides off the pitch. "This isn't my level – they're all better than me," she laughs, but everyone encourages her back and soon she's hitting and passing the ball with the rest.

But only in walk. "Come on Sarah, trot," encourages Jason, passing her the ball. She does, and she scores. ▶



Sarah Morton loves the buzz that playing polo offers

Polo can be affordable
for anyone



"The ponies are
sharp and quick"



"That was fantastic," she says, dismounting. "When can I do it again?"

Rent a pony

The polo school not only teaches, it loans out ponies – or strings of ponies – for matches.

This makes it possible for people who've fallen in love with the game to compete, without the expense of buying four of their own horses and keeping them at livery.

It's something tree surgeon Josh Powner is doing. He'd always enjoyed three-day eventing, but hadn't ridden for a few years. Wanting to get back into riding, he decided to give polo a try.

This is his third season and he says he is able to compete because he can hire horses for chukkas from the New Forest Polo School at £60 for a club match.

"It really makes it achievable for me," he says. "I earn about £500 a week and I'm 100 per cent happy to spend one day's wages on polo each week.

"But I wouldn't know where you would start with the actual costs of playing polo.

"Even if you had your own stables at home, you've still got the vet's bills and shoeing, and then there's the expense of a lorry to get you to matches.

"But for me, if I go away on holiday – as I just have – and I can't justify the cost of playing polo, I'm not tied into anything. I can give it a miss for a week and then start again. So, from that point of view, it makes it much more affordable."

Currently, Josh is trying to play two chukkas a week at the neighbouring New Forest Polo Club. He hires Jason's horses, which are supplied tacked up and ready to go at the ground before the match.

"Pony rental is brilliant, though I'd love to own my own horses one day," he reveals. "You get some really nice ponies here and everything is done for you.

"You can come from work and everything is ready. You hop on and off you go."

After a taster session, Sarah signed up for a course of lessons



"We want more people to come into the sport and to enjoy it"

Changing the image

Of course, all this is a long way from the public image of polo.

In June, *The Daily Telegraph* reported on the British Polo Day at Henley-on-Thames. Twelve Royal families, 100 billionaires, and influential businessmen such as Sir Richard Branson were invited. Harrods held a garden party.

Then in July, the day before the christening of baby Princess Charlotte, *The Daily Mail* reported on Prince William playing in the Audi Polo Challenge. TV stars Eddie Redmayne and Matt Smith were among the celebrity onlookers.

But in reality, it's a game that more and more people are getting into. There are more than 70

polo clubs in the UK, a figure that has doubled in a decade, and some 3,000 registered players.

There has also been a dramatic increase in younger players, with more than 500 school and university players registered nationwide.

Though the game is largely associated with the south of England, there are clubs from Inverness to Yorkshire, and East Anglia to the New Forest.

That's just what the Hurlingham Polo Association (the headquarters of the game) wants to see happen.

"Polo is definitely becoming more affordable for people," says deputy chief executive Oliver Hughes. "We want people to come into the sport and enjoy it.

"It doesn't have to cost a king's ransom, but it is one of those sports that will take as much money as you want to throw at it, like anything with horses."

Oliver welcomes the establishment of cheaper schools, like the New Forest Polo School, that enable people to get a taste of the game.

"It's a thrill galloping and hitting the ball," he says. "It makes you want to do it again and again.

"It's a fast game that gives you plenty of adrenaline and is great fun.

"And unlike a lot of riding, it's very sociable – after all, matches take place at clubs. It really can become an obsession."

Back at the yard in the heart of the New Forest, Jason says that the attractions of polo lie in its variety.

"There's the enjoyment of riding, of hitting a ball," he states. "There's the adrenaline rush with the riding off, but it's a tactical game too. It's like chess on horseback. It's very complex."



Learning the all-important 'swing' on the ground



"Polo can become an obsession"

He adds: "It's a bit of a kick. People who have never thought about the sport say they wish they had known about it before. But it has been a bit of a closed shop. That's what we are trying to change. People from any background can play and it really can be done on a budget."

The school offers lessons on Saturday mornings and weekday mornings and evenings to fit round clients' work commitments. And, says Jason, they are planning on offering more discounted lessons through Groupon during the winter, in their indoor arena.

"The interest in polo is really rising," he says. "There are so many normal people taking up the sport and that makes me feel really good."

Back on the pitch, the two Sarahs are practising their riding-off in walk. Then, smiling broadly, they head off down the turf to join the rest of the new recruits, the ponies cantering easily, gently, almost bouncing on the spot.

There are no spectators, no members of the Royal family, no press photographers (well, apart from *Horse magazine*). It's just a handful of horse-lovers hitting a ball around a green field.

It may be raining, but it is the very epitome of a summer's day. ■

● The New Forest Polo School is based near Lymington, Hants. To find out more, visit: www.newforestpoloschool.co.uk.

There are more than 70 polo clubs in the UK



5 things you didn't know about polo

Who invented polo?

Persian noblemen played polo as far back as 500BC. The Indian army can be credited with introducing polo to the West. And you thought it was British...

Why do the players wear white trousers?

Yes, we're used to seeing Princes William and Harry attired in white jeans in the press. But like many polo traditions, this can be traced back to India where the game was played by nobility and introduced to British army officers. It's quite simple – because they were playing in the heat, players preferred light clothing, hence the white trousers.

What's going on with the ponies' manes and tails?

Free-flowing manes and tails are considered hazardous in polo as they can become entangled with the players' mallets or their double reins. So, manes are hogged and the ponies' tails are wrapped or plaited (or both) to keep them safely out of the way.

Can you use one horse for the whole game?

No. Polo ponies run the equivalent of one to two miles during a seven-and-a-half-minute chukka so they have to be rested. At the high-goal level, players have a fresh horse after every chukka. Some ponies can come back and play a second chukka later in a match. But it's not common.

What are the white boards that run the length of the polo field?

Polo can be played with or without boards, and in the winter is played in indoor arenas. But boards are preferred when there are spectators around simply to stop the ball hitting people – and to keep it in play.





"I want to be an inspiration to others"

After being diagnosed with type one diabetes aged 17, Alice Wiseman has set out to prove that, with the help of a "one in a million pony", a chronic condition is no barrier to achieving success in the saddle...

It was nerve-wracking enough having to research and deliver an A-level biology presentation on type one diabetes but not half as scary as discovering that I had every single one of the condition's symptoms," recalls 20-year-old Alice Wiseman.

"I ticked off the key signs of the condition: A strong thirst – I was drinking gallons of water. Check. Weight loss – I'd off-loaded a stone in a month, despite feeling hungry all the time and eating constantly. Check. Blurred vision, especially in the mornings. Check. Always feeling tired... check.

"I booked an appointment with my doctor and reeled off all my symptoms. He wasted no time in sending me to A&E, where in less than four hours, pinprick and urine tests had confirmed the diagnosis. In fact, my blood sugar level was so high, it was off the scale and the monitor couldn't read it!

"Although I knew I had all the symptoms, the diagnosis still came as a shock.

"But I wasn't able to focus fully on my condition and its implications until I had competed in a showing class at the South West Equine Fair the following day.

"I was determined to make it into the ring, despite receiving disapproving looks from the medical staff when I told them.

"In the end, they agreed to let me out of Plymouth's Derriford Hospital under the strict condition that I learned how to inject myself with insulin before I was discharged.

"Yet the very thought of this petrified me. I hated needles and the prospect of sticking one in me was a scary one. Nevertheless, I promised doctors I'd inject myself at 9pm that evening and again 12 hours later."

Realisation dawns

"The next day – a freezing December morning three years ago – I took a deep breath and gave myself a shot of insulin before getting ready for the show.

"Later, having secured third place, the full impact of the diagnosis hit me. All the terrible things that can result – going blind or ending up in a coma – crossed my mind and I became very worried.

"I shuddered when I thought what could have happened if I'd not gone to the doctor when I did. I could easily have been in a coma by now.

The rider has formed a winning partnership with pony Flurry



Words: Joanne Bednall; photography: Hamish Mitchell

"Despite this, I tried to look at the positives: this was perhaps the 'best' time to be diagnosed as I was still young enough to change my lifestyle.

"At first, though, pricking my finger and monitoring my blood sugar levels eight to 10 times a day, and injecting myself, was hard.

"However, since having an insulin pump in September 2014, my life has been transformed.

"The size of a mobile phone, the pump has a needle inserted under my skin that enables me to control my blood glucose levels even when I am riding. ▶



An insulin pump has transformed Alice's life

"I was determined to make it into the show-ring, despite receiving disapproving looks from the medical staff"

Alice ensures she gives life to the full



Jelly Babies are kept to hand in case Alice's blood sugar level drops

"It makes a beeping noise but the horses have become used to it and don't turn a hair at the sound any more.

"At shows, people are generally interested when they see my pump, although their reaction is usually something like: 'Oh you must have had too much sugar'. There isn't much awareness about diabetes.

"I wear a medical alert band around my wrist so organisers are aware of my condition, plus my sister-in-law, Alisa Rowland, always comes with me to competitions and has pockets bulging with a never-ending supply of Jelly Babies."

Never give up

"Since being diagnosed with diabetes, I have never once considered quitting riding – that would be giving in to the condition and letting it win.

"I have just had to adapt. A few times, I've felt a bit down but it makes me more – not less – determined to ride.

"Although I don't have an equestrian background, I got the riding bug from my cousin, who had horses.

Type one diabetes: the facts

- Diabetes is a lifelong condition that causes a person's blood sugar (glucose) level to become too high.
- There are two forms of diabetes: Type one is where the pancreas doesn't produce any insulin; while in type two, the pancreas either doesn't produce enough insulin or the body's cells don't react to insulin.
- Insulin is a hormone produced by the pancreas that's responsible for controlling the amount of glucose in the blood.
- In young people such as Alice, the symptoms of type one diabetes – an autoimmune condition – usually develop very quickly, over a few days or weeks.
- To avoid serious health complications such as damaged blood vessels, nerves, organs and vision, sufferers need regular insulin injections to keep their glucose levels normal, as well as closely monitoring their diet and exercise.
- For the lucky few like Alice, an expensive piece of equipment called an insulin pump can make life a whole lot easier. This small device constantly pumps insulin into the user's subcutaneous tissue at a rate they control through a needle/cannula inserted under their skin.

For more information about diabetes, visit: www.diabetes.org.uk.

"I started loaning a pony – a cheeky part-Dartmoor gelding called Digby – when I was eight. I joined the Dartmoor Hunt branch of the Pony Club but Digby wouldn't jump, so I upgraded to a New Forest mare called Greencottage Fantasia, who's now 15.

"Then, 10 years ago, when Alisa worked at the Shilstone Rocks Stud, she was gifted a very nice two-year-old Dartmoor filly.

"The original idea was for the pony, Shilstone Rocks Snow Flurry, to be used for carriage driving but she proved such a gem when she was broken to ride at four that she stayed under saddle.

"I would describe myself as a nervous rider when I was younger but with Alisa's knowledge and support, we backed Flurry together. As I was

only 12 at the time, it was a real learning curve – but also very satisfying.

"Our first competition was a local TREC event, which we both enjoyed and we came home with a rosette. Since then, we have gone from strength to strength and Flurry has given me tons of confidence – she's consistent and sensible to ride and I trust her completely.

"We have done a lot of schooling and showing plus Pony Club showjumping, cross-country and one-day events. About five years ago, we progressed to doing some dressage, taking part in Pony Club area teams.

"The better our dressage became, the better we did in the show-ring and the more our jumping improved – it was nice to beat the big horses!



"Flurry is a one-in-a-million pony"



The pair competes at Novice level in dressage



Celebrating real riders with

HORSEWARE
IRELAND



Flurry can tell if Alice's blood sugar level is low



The pony is compact and powerful, says Alice

"If my blood sugar level is low, Flurry picks up on it and lets me know. She refuses to eat and watches or nudges me"

"After local showing success, Flurry and I have come third at Devon County Show in the Dartmoor ridden class for the past three years.

"We have also won the ridden mare of the year award for the Dartmoor Pony Society – a national accolade – for two years on the trot.

"At our first unaffiliated Prelim dressage test in 2010, I was nervous and worried that I would forget the test but we scored 60 per cent with some very favourable comments from the judge.

"By the time we stepped up to Novice level in 2012, we were finding it all easier and getting better marks.

"We won the unaffiliated Bicton Arena Winter Dressage Series Novice Championship in 2014 and 2015. Last October [2014], I affiliated with British Dressage and we finished ninth at Kingston Maurward in the Winter Regionals at Prelim level. We are now working at Elementary level and my dream is to get to Medium.

"I am lucky that at 5ft 2in, I am not too big to ride this special 12hh pony. I love the breed's nature and movement – Dartmoors are like compact horses and can move very well with such power."

A strong partnership

"My partnership with Flurry runs a lot deeper than success at shows, however. We have developed

a strong bond – after all, I have known her since she was two and she's 12 now – and we have grown together.

"If my blood sugar levels are low, Flurry picks up on it and lets me know. She usually scoffs her food and hay but if my blood sugar is low, she refuses to eat and just watches or nudges me.

"As soon as my level is normal again, she starts eating and stops fussing me. At a show, she will headbutt me to alert me or if I am riding, she will suddenly become unresponsive to my aids.

"A couple of times, when the level has been really low, she's tilted her head towards the stirrup.

"I know her so well now that I have come to recognise the signs and will instantly check my blood sugar level.

"Having type one diabetes is tough. You can't have a day off from it. You can't say, 'I don't want to check my blood sugar level today' because you've got it for life.

"No-one in my family has the condition and I don't know anyone else with it – it's just pure bad luck, I guess.

"But I hope I can give inspiration to other sufferers. My advice is to not give up – you can ride, compete and achieve your dreams if you really try and put your heart and mind into it. But having a one-in-a-million pony does help!" ■

Year-round protection

This year marks Horseware's 30th Anniversary. To commemorate this milestone of Horseware remaining the leading global supplier of horse rugs, we have designed a limited edition version of our best selling turnout rug, the Rambo Duo,

Made from tough waterproof and breathable 1,000 denier ballistic nylon, with a light 100g fibre fill, the outer rug is perfect for the milder seasons.

With an easy to secure 300g liner, the Duo turns into the cosiest turnout for your horse during the coldest of winter days.

The limited edition Rambo Duo in the iconic green with red trim colours is only available this season, and can be purchased in stores in September. Visit: www.horseware.com



It's time to vote for your favourite **Equilibrium Products Rising Star of the Year** finalist. Here, we introduce the last contender, Alicia Griffiths, and remind you of the other finalists



Alicia has spent time getting to know Risky

There are no limits!

When 30-year-old Alicia Griffiths became severely visually impaired 10 years ago, she was determined not to let it stop her continuing to compete in dressage.

"What doesn't kill you makes you stronger," says the courageous rider, who is based in Bristol. "You get dealt a hand in life and you have to make the most of it, otherwise it will beat you."

Alicia picked up a rare tropical virus, on holiday in Sri Lanka. It attacked her brain and eventually led to her losing almost all her sight.

"I spent a lot of time in hospital because I was extremely ill," Alicia recalls. "It was my mum who suggested my love of horses and dressage might give me the boost I needed. So she took me to the yard to see my horse Medina while I was still in hospital."

"My last hospital admission was in February 2006 and by April I was back in the saddle."

"It felt weird at first, and I often suffered motion sickness, but I had lost out on going to university and I could no longer drive, so I wasn't about to miss out on riding as well."

Following a passion

Alicia competes as a Grade III para dressage rider, but following the tragic loss of her two horses in 2011 and 2014, she had to find a suitable new competition horse.

This turned out to be a seven eighths Thoroughbred chestnut mare called Risky. While she might not seem the obvious choice for a para rider, Alicia says Risky is a star.

"We've only had one lesson since she arrived in February," Alicia says. "My aim this year was for us to spend time getting to know each other."

"However, in just a few outings, we have qualified for the Petplan Area Festivals and the British Dressage regionals at Elementary level."

"This completely surpassed my expectations. Risky has been brilliant – I couldn't ask for a better horse."

Alicia finds her way around the dressage arena by counting the strides between markers.

"This only becomes a problem if the horse spooks away from the boards," Alicia adds.

"Because Risky is still new to me, Mum or Dad call my test out for me. However, I prefer to compete without a caller."

A busy lifestyle

The mum of two fits riding around her family and a part-time job working in human resources. She manages to ride most days, walking the short way to the yard with her dog.

"I tend to stick to riding in the school," she says. "I might occasionally venture out into a field, as long as there are hedges all around it, but hacking out terrifies me."

"My mum hacks Risky for me and I have a friend called Laura who jumps her from time to time, so she gets some variety."

"Risky is beautifully looked after by Stuart and Nic, who run the livery yard in Bristol where she is kept, so that takes some of the pressure off."

Having achieved so much with the mare in a short space of time, the rider has set herself higher goals.

"I am hoping to qualify for the Area Festivals at Medium level and be picked to ride for a para dressage team," she concludes.

Commenting on Alicia being chosen as a Rising Stars finalist, Laura Cutter of Equilibrium Products said: "We were impressed by her achievements and determination, despite the setbacks of losing two competition horses in the last few years."

● To find out how you can vote for Alicia, or our other finalists (see right), turn to page 69.

"You get dealt a hand in life and you have to make the most of it, otherwise it will beat you"

The other finalists

Sophie Davies

A member of the British squad for the UK American Quarter Horse Association, Sophie travelled from Lincolnshire to America last year to compete in a 'ranch sorting' event, which she won.

The young rider's win in the Youth World Cup event was the only one for the UK, and afterwards she decided to compete more seriously in Western shows.

After getting bitten by the Western bug as a child, Sophie went to Holland every month for lessons, where she rode a reining schoolmaster.

"I love reining," says the young rider, who's current top ride is Quarter Horse PW Chew. "It requires the horse to perform a pattern of circles, spins and stops and I find it quite relaxing."

Sophie also competes in a wide range of other Western disciplines and has her eye on riding in the AQHA World Championship Show, which is held in America.



"This is my number one goal," adds Sophie. "You can have over a thousand entries in one class and compete against million dollar riders."

"I was lucky to spectate there a few years ago and it was such a thrill. There is an incredible atmosphere and the whole crowd stamp their feet."

Meredith Baker

Meredith from Andover, Hants, rode her own horse Miz to 16th place at the Young Rider TREC World Championships in Italy.

Their performance included a personal best in the control of paces section of the competition, scoring 57 out of 60.

"Miz was such a good boy," says Meredith, speaking of her 15-year-old, 14.3hh Criollo. "I wasn't expecting to achieve a top placing and just to be there was an incredible experience."

The rider took up TREC five years ago after being inspired by a demonstration.

She was eliminated at her first attempt, but decided to keep on trying and took the sport up seriously in 2013.

In August of that year Meredith stepped up to Level three with Miz, and continued their winning streak.

The rider wants to try some Level four competitions and compete for her country at senior level.

"Even at Level three the orienteering section can take five or six hours," she says. "At Level four it's even longer and more technical, but I'll see how we get on."



Becca Clark

Following a 17-year break from riding, Becca, from Norfolk, found herself with a new horse – a nine-year-old chestnut ex-racehorse.

Becca only bought Red to hack out, but she ended up taking him to local shows where she did some showing, dressage and jumping.

When she entered Red for his first Retraining of Racehorses (ROR) showing class at the Royal Norfolk Show in 2013, the rider was amazed to finish sixth out of a class of 28.

"I entered some more local classes and Red really began to shine in the ring," Becca recalls.

"Finally, I took him to Houghton Show in Cambridgeshire to have a go at the

Search for a Star Riding Horse class and we won, qualifying for Horse of the Year Show (HOYS)."

Becca couldn't wait to ride at HOYS and to her utter amazement was pulled in first. She says she "cried, shook then laughed with joy".

For a rider who has no access to a school and does her training work in the paddock or out on hacks, she is living proof it is possible to achieve your dreams without top facilities.



Photo: ES Photography

Madeline Heath

A kind gesture from a family friend set Madeline on the path to showing success.

The generous friend gave Madeline a four-year-old Anglo Arab X Welsh gelding, called Romain Rouge.

Last year, Madeline, from Oxted in Surrey, rode Romain to victory in the Search for a Star Riding Club Show Horse Championships at HOYS.

"Romain wasn't the easiest horse to break in," the rider recalls. "However, I put in a lot of hard work and it paid off."

Madeline and Romain also take part in affiliated dressage at Novice level and have qualified for the summer regionals this year.

The rider has been bitten by the side-saddle bug after going sideways at a 'have a go at side-saddle' day and says



Photo: ES Photography

Romain has taken to it like a duck to water.

She also competes Jeeves, a 21-year-old Thoroughbred X Welsh, in veteran showing classes and dressage.

In January this year the pair were crowned overall dressage to music champions at an Emile Faurie Foundation Strictly Come Dressage event. ▶

Kirsty Aird

Noted for her success in the show-ring and in showjumping competitions, Kirsty, from Fife, Scotland, is a versatile rider who is able to get the best out of all types of horse or pony.

She competes in affiliated showjumping classes up to 1.45m and in a whole range of showing classes, from mountain and moorland to hunter classes.

The horses and ponies she rides range in height from 12hh to 17.2hh!

"Showjumping is my first love," Kirsty reveals. "The showing side is down to me being lucky enough to be asked to produce horses for other people."

Kirsty's achievements include winning the 2013 Mountain & Moorland Working Hunter Pony Championship at Hickstead's Royal International Horse Show with Falfield Beeleaf.

She also finished fourth at Horse of the Year Show in the same year.

With her current top showjumper, Jumping Mac Flash, Kirsty won the Scottish 1.30m championship and finished seventh in the Young Rider Final at the Royal Highland Show last year.

The rider says she loves the fact that all her horses have their own personalities and qualities: "It makes working with them so much fun."



Kirsty produces horses from 12hh to 17.2hh: "Showjumping is my first love"

Photo: Sinclair Photography

Tamsin Drew

After a bad fall, which left her confidence shattered, event rider Tamsin, from Bishop's Stortford, Herts, took a 14-year break from horses and moved to London to pursue a career.

In her early 30s, she was back in the saddle and realised how much she had missed riding.

The rider soon found her perfect equine partner in Captain, a 16.2hh black gelding, and the pair went on to compete at British Eventing (BE) 100 and BE Novice levels, gaining some impressive placings along the way.

When Captain had time off with an injury, Tamsin was offered the ride on Brook, and they achieved 10 clear cross-country rounds in 10 outings, completing a CIC one-star event.

"That was definitely one of my eventing highlights," the rider recalls. "I am so grateful for the chance to ride Brook."

With Captain now back in

work, Tamsin says she is taking every day as it comes.

"I am just happy that he is sound again," she says. "By the end of the year I would love to complete my first CCI Novice with him, but I can't look too far ahead."

Tamsin says riding in a CIC one-star with Brook was an "eventing highlight"



Photo: Dave Murray

"Several trainers have told me C could get to Grand Prix level"



Photo: Graham Cannon

Daisy Powell

Having enjoyed significant success in the dressage arena with her home-produced horse C No Limit (C), Nottingham-based Daisy is aiming the gelding at Prix St Georges level.

In 2014, they finished fourth at the British Dressage National Championships in the Medium restricted class, after qualifying on a wild card.

"I had wanted to ride a good test, but I went with no real expectations as C is still low mileage at that level," Daisy says.

"Luckily, C forgot all about the crowds and he felt so

confident when we performed our test."

The rider has to juggle her horses and competing around university – where she's studying for an equine sports psychology and science degree – and a part-time job at a showjumping yard.

She also enjoys coaching and is taking her UKCC Level 2 qualification this year.

"I bought C with the plan to sell him after reaching Advanced Medium level," Daisy states. "Now I want to do more, and several trainers have told me he could get to Grand Prix level."

Alice Goring

Alice, from Weybridge in Surrey, is frequently on the yard until gone 10pm, because she rides after a full day's work in London.

The young rider proves you don't need big horses to event and has already competed at Intermediate level with 15hh The Little Frenchman (Finley).

Alice's other horse, Jasper, is another pocket rocket, standing

at just 15.2hh. She bought him after watching him trot five strides on the lunge.

"I instantly loved him," Alice says. "So far he has impressed me with his positive attitude. He jumped clear at his first event."

Alice hopes to go Advanced with Finley but more than anything wants to do her best.

"As long as I give it my all, continue to learn and have fun along the way, I will be happy."



"I want to continue to learn and have fun along the way"

Photo: Richard Grigsby

Laura Durkan

Laura, from West Sussex, is an up-and-coming eventer.

The dedicated rider, who has a young child and works part-time as a sports coach, produced her horses herself.

"My three mares are Jing Mai (Jing), Lady May (Dottie) and Lady Livello (Livvy)," says Laura. "They are all very different, but I am so fond of them. I find it hard to sell horses on, so ours tend to have a home for life."

Laura has home produced Jing to one-star level and is aiming for Osberton Horse Trials in October.

While she says it would be a dream to take a home-produced horse to four-star level and maybe compete at Badminton Horse Trials one day, the training excites her just as much.

"I love to see the horses place their trust in me," she says. "It's so rewarding to watch them develop and improve."

Laura produced her three horses: "It's so rewarding watching them develop"



Photo: URG Photography

Chloe Jones

Cheshire-based Chloe is making her mark in the world of showjumping.

Chloe puts her success down to building a great rapport and trust with her horses, in particular her current ride, a 24-year-old Belgian Warmblood called Tioen (Tio).

"Although Tio had jumped in Foxhunter and Newcomers classes earlier in his career, he was sold on and eventually ended up back with his original owner," Chloe says.

"By this time he lacked trust in anyone and I was informed we would be lucky if he would ever jump a one-metre course again.

"I spent two years getting to know him and building up his trust in me, before we started competing at affiliated level."

In 2013, Chloe was talent spotted and picked to compete for England on 138cm and 148cm teams. The team won two gold medals.

Chloe loves the adrenaline rush she gets from showjumping



Last year she was selected for the team again and jumped a double clear to help England to another gold victory.

As well as being a keen showjumper, Chloe has a passion for racing motorbikes in off-road competitions.

She says she loves the adrenaline rush she gets from showjumping and motocross racing and the quick decisions you have to make about speed and turns.

Vote for your Rising Star

The Equilibrium Products' Rising Stars competition is aimed at helping aspiring amateur riders of all ages succeed in their chosen discipline.

Over the past 11 months, Equilibrium has chosen its finalists after carefully considering a number of factors.

These include dedication, level of achievements, versatility, overcoming adversity and how riders have improved.

But there can only be one winner who will receive £1,000 worth of Equilibrium products and the company's support for 12 months.

Horse readers are invited to join in the voting and choose who they think is most deserving of the prize.

Now that you've read about all this year's talented finalists it's time to decide who is your favourite.

Casting a vote is simple – visit: www.equilibriumproducts.com/news/rider/rising-star-voting-2015 and click on your favourite.

The total number of votes from the public will be counted for each entrant. The three



The lucky winner will receive £1,000 worth of goodies from Equilibrium Products

riders with the highest number of votes will go before the Rising Stars judging panel, who will make the final decision.

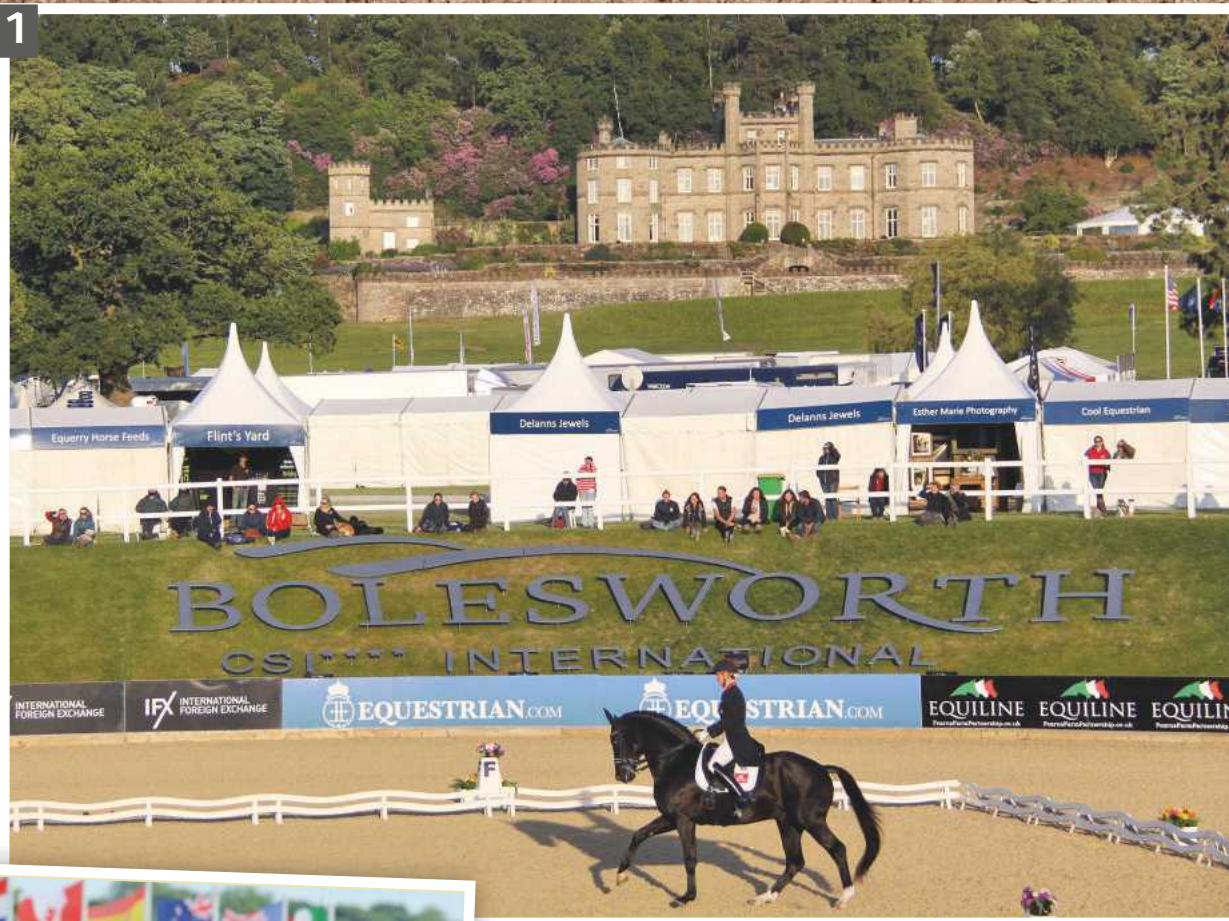
Voting closes on 31 August 2015.



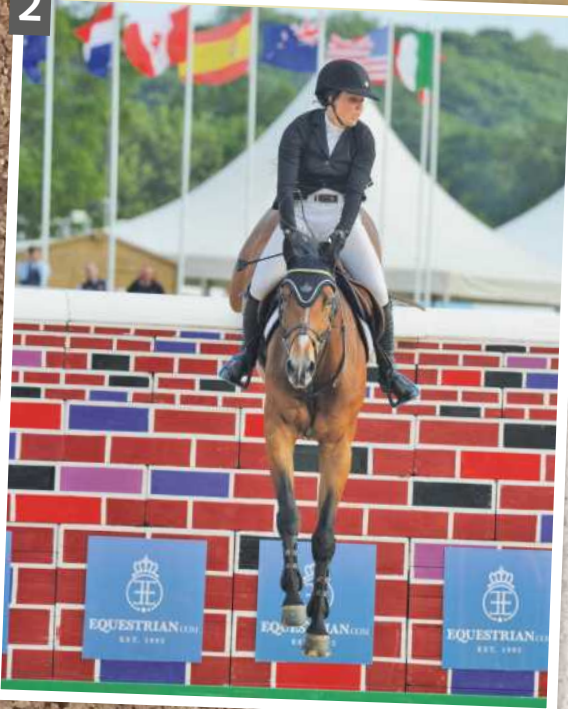
Out&About

Photos from shows and events

1



2



Bolesworth CSI**** International

Bolesworth Castle, Chester, Cheshire

Top riders from all over the world rode at this year's Bolesworth International.

The showjumping spectacle had a prize fund of £250,000, with international classes held on each day.

For the first time, the show hosted a dressage-to-music class, and other attractions included camel racing, Burghley Young Event Horse qualifiers and an Express Eventing competition.

Caught on camera

1. Laura Tomlinson finished second in the Intermediate I freestyle dressage-to-music class riding Duvals Capri Sonne Jr.
2. Victoria Gulliksen clears the Puissance wall, which went up to 2.10m.
3. Joint winners in the Puissance were Ireland's David Simpson (left) and Norway's Victoria Gulliksen (right).

4. Scottish rider James Smith was first and second in international classes with Cumina.

5. Crowd favourite Geoff Billington dons a fetching Superman outfit.

6. Yazmin Pinchen gains the biggest win of



We want to hear from you

If you've been out competing and would like a mention in *Horse magazine*, email details of the show you attended and the class you took part in to joanna.browne@mytimemedia.com.

her career, riding to victory in the Grand Prix with her mother's Van De Vivaldi.

7. China's **Alex Hua Tian** takes the top spot in the Express Eventing competition, aboard the chestnut gelding Don Geniro.

8. The Gladiators Knockout competition proved to be popular with spectators.

9. Dressage duo **Michael Eilberg** and Woodlander Farouche prove they are still hard to beat, by winning the freestyle to music with a score of 77.62 per cent.

4



5



6



7



8



9



Out&About

Hartpury Festival of Dressage

Hartpury College, Gloucestershire

Now in its tenth year, the Hartpury Festival of Dressage attracted spectators from all around the country.

Caught on camera

1. **Charlotte Dujardin's** support team of best friend Ian Cast, trainer and mentor Carl Hester and team helper Tim Sillevs were on the sidelines while the rider was warming up.
2. It was a double win for Olympic gold-medallists **Charlotte** and Valegro in the Grand Prix and Grand Prix Special.
3. **Fiona Bigwood** rides Atterupgaards Orthilia to second place in the Grand Prix Special, finishing on a score of 75.922 per cent.

4. Farouche and rider **Michael Eilberg** win the Prix St Georges.

5. **Becky Moody** and the eight-year-old gelding Carinsio won three classes at the Festival.

6. The five-year-old Young Dressage Horse title was taken by **Lucy Cartwright** and Isobel Wessels' San Marco.

7. More success for Team Hester. **Carl** and Nip Tuck win Saturday night's gala evening Grand Prix Freestyle and finish second behind Charlotte in the Grand Prix.



Photos: Jon Stroud and Kevin Sparrow



5

6

7



Mounted Games Championships Lincoln Showground

Caught on camera

1. **Holly Eyre** riding **Billy** in the Open Championships for the Derbyshire team.

2. Competing for England South in the Under 17 Home International is **Charlie Sutton** on **Sandi**, tackling the carton race.

1



2



Photos: Baron Halpenny

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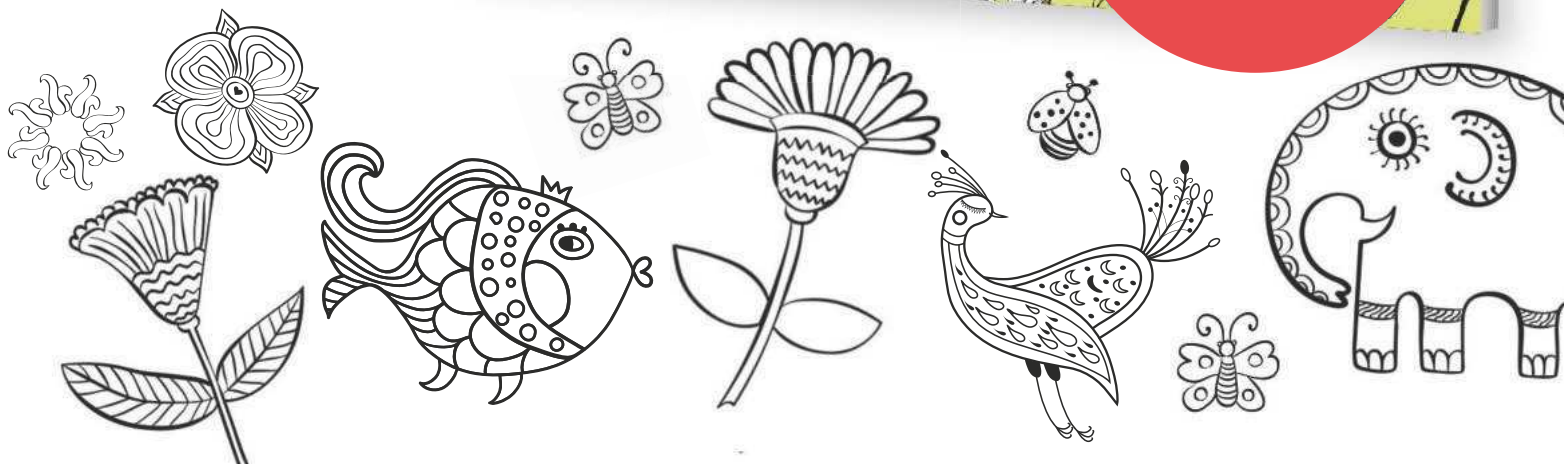
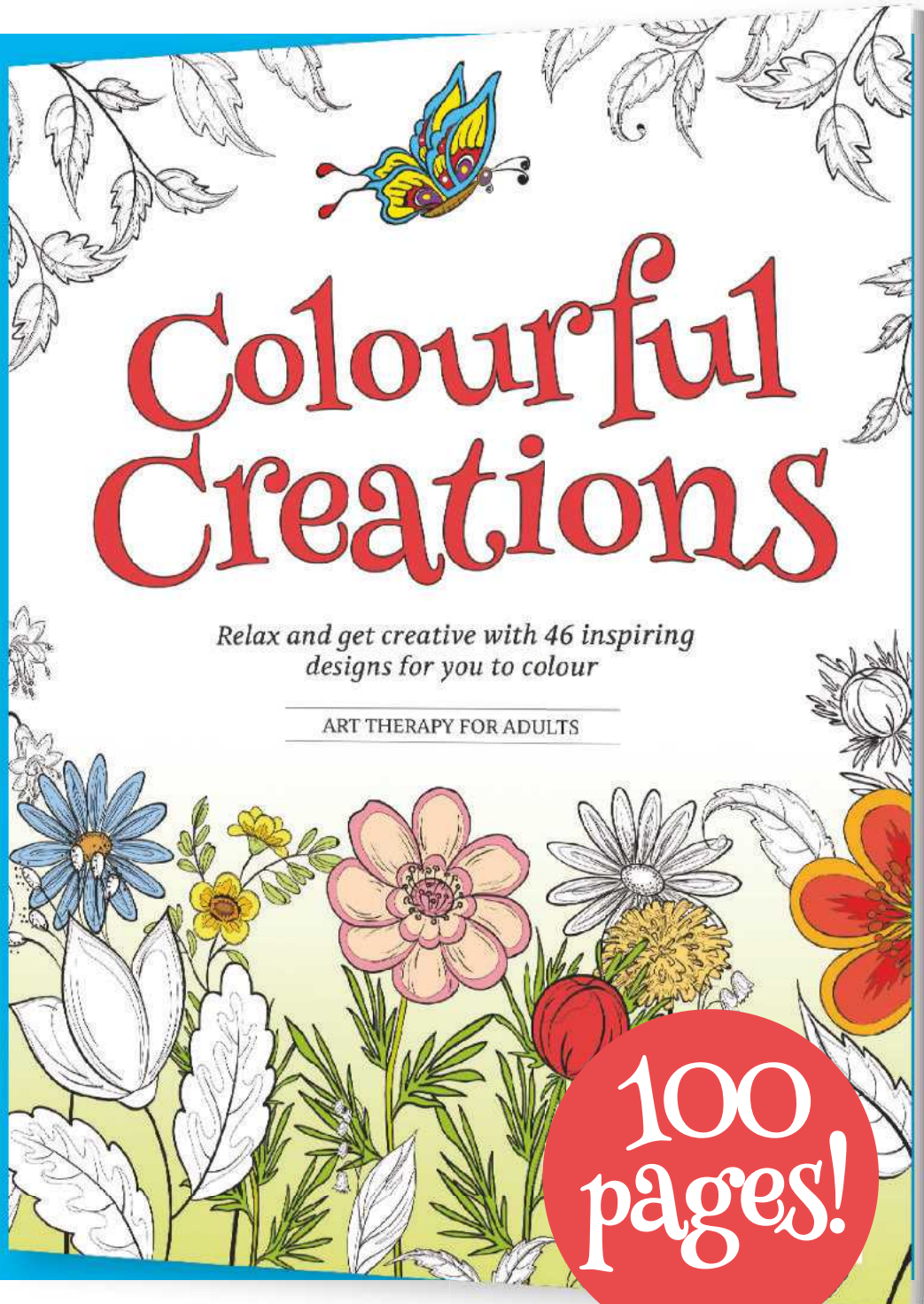
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HORSESENSE

24 PAGES of health-care, management and veterinary advice

WISE WORDS

"Trot your horse up regularly on a hard, flat surface to check he is moving evenly.

"A good time to do this is when your farrier is visiting. Therefore, you can get an expert's opinion on the way your horse moves and detect any changes early on."

Sarah Stewart, BHSI





Early detection

Spot any signs of illness or injury sooner through giving your horse a regular health check. Vet **David Thompson** shows you how

OUR EXPERT

David Thompson



Veterinary surgeon David works at Abbey Equine Clinic in Abergavenny. He qualified from the Royal Veterinary College, London, in 1990 and is involved in all aspects of equine work.

The sooner you spot a problem with your horse's health, the earlier the right care can be given and this usually ensures a better outcome.

One of the best early warning systems is owner intuition.

If you know your horse inside out, you will instantly know when something is wrong,

even if there is only a subtle change to his appearance, demeanour or behaviour.

Spend some time learning what is normal for your horse. One way to do this is to simply observe him – watch him at different times of day, or in different situations.

"Your horse's general demeanour can be the first indication of a problem," says vet David

Know his vital signs

Pulse: It's possible to take your horse's heart rate by checking the pulse, or listening to the heart beat if you happen to have a stethoscope! The easiest pulses to find are on the inside of the jaw and at the back of the pastern. Only light pressure is needed and if your horse is a little fidgety it can be easier to count the beats for 15 seconds and multiply the number by four.

Breathing rate: Stand behind the horse so you can see his ribs going in and out with each breath. A normal horse breathes 10-15 times a minute. It's not only the number of breaths that is important but also the amount of effort involved. If the abdomen becomes involved in breathing it is worth calling your vet to check the horse.

Temperature: To take your horse's temperature, position yourself safely. Stand

to the side, where you are less likely to be kicked and you can still move with your horse if he becomes restless. Lift the tail with one hand and insert a thermometer into the rectum, for 30 seconds, with the other hand. The temperature should be 37.5°C to 38°C.



Insert the thermometer for 30 seconds



Stand behind the horse and count the number of breaths he takes

If you know what's normal for your horse you'll spot a health problem much quicker

Thompson. "And be aware of his behaviour and response to things going on around him. Horses are creatures of habit and routine and any change could signify a problem.

"For example, you would expect a horse to be aware of different noises and activities going on around him.

"So, a lack of interest in food, a low head carriage and a dull and disinterested expression should prompt alarm bells to ring."

Another useful thing you can do is take and record your horse's 'vital' signs – temperature, heart and breathing rates – on a regular basis. This will allow you to identify a problem if they are unusually elevated or lower than they should be.

To help you keep an eye on your horse's health, we asked David to run through a series of head-to-toe checks anyone can perform:

Nose: Study discharge

Watery nasal discharge is quite normal. However, if you have any discoloured discharge – white, cream, green or yellow – or if the discharge is quite thick with mucus, it suggests there is a problem, either within the head region or further back in the lungs.

Look at the shape of the nostrils – if they are flaring out, the horse is struggling to breathe.

In the case of respiratory problems, the nostrils will often flare right out to try and maximise the opening of the airways and improve oxygen intake.



Look for any signs of discoloured nasal discharge

Mouth: Assess the gums

Gently peel back the lips and look at the colour of the gums around the teeth. They should be a pale pink colour and moist to the touch.

A paler than normal colour indicates a decrease in red blood cells and/or oxygen within the circulation that can be caused by blood loss, anaemia, dehydration and chronic (long-term) infections.

A bright red colour indicates toxicity or mild shock, which can progress to a grey or blue colour as the condition worsens.

A bright yellow colour is associated with liver problems.

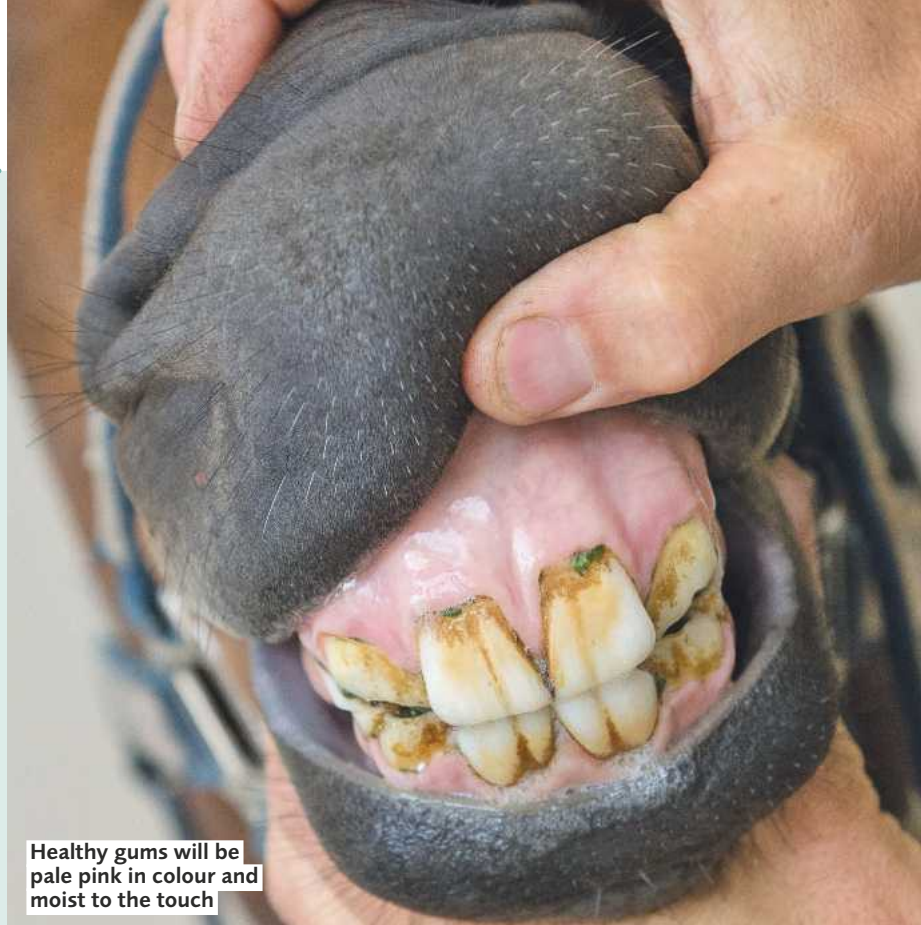
You can check the 'capillary refill' time by applying light pressure with your thumb to the gum and then counting how long it takes for the colour to return.

If it takes more than two seconds for the gums to go from white to pink this can indicate a problem with the circulation (blood flow), dehydration or shock.

Teeth: Look and feel

It is important to have your horse's teeth seen regularly by your vet or a qualified dentist.

However, it is good practice to visually check the front teeth that you can see by parting the horse's lips.



Healthy gums will be pale pink in colour and moist to the touch

Also, feel externally along the sides and bottom of the jaw. Lumps and bumps along the lower jaw line are quite normal in younger

horses as adult teeth wait to erupt. But from five years old onwards they can be caused by issues such as tooth root infections.

Eyes: Act promptly

Healthy eyes should be open, symmetrical, clear, bright and free of discharge. When you check them, stand in front and compare them to one another. Are they open equally? Consider the symmetry between the position of the upper and lower eyelids and the colour of the inner eyelids.

The dilation of the pupils should be relative to the amount of light around you. If it is dark, the pupils should be large and if it is light, the pupils should be smaller.

It is common for eyes to become irritated by dust and flies and this often causes a watery discharge. If the problem is not addressed it can develop into an eye infection that is characterised by a thicker, more yellow discharge.

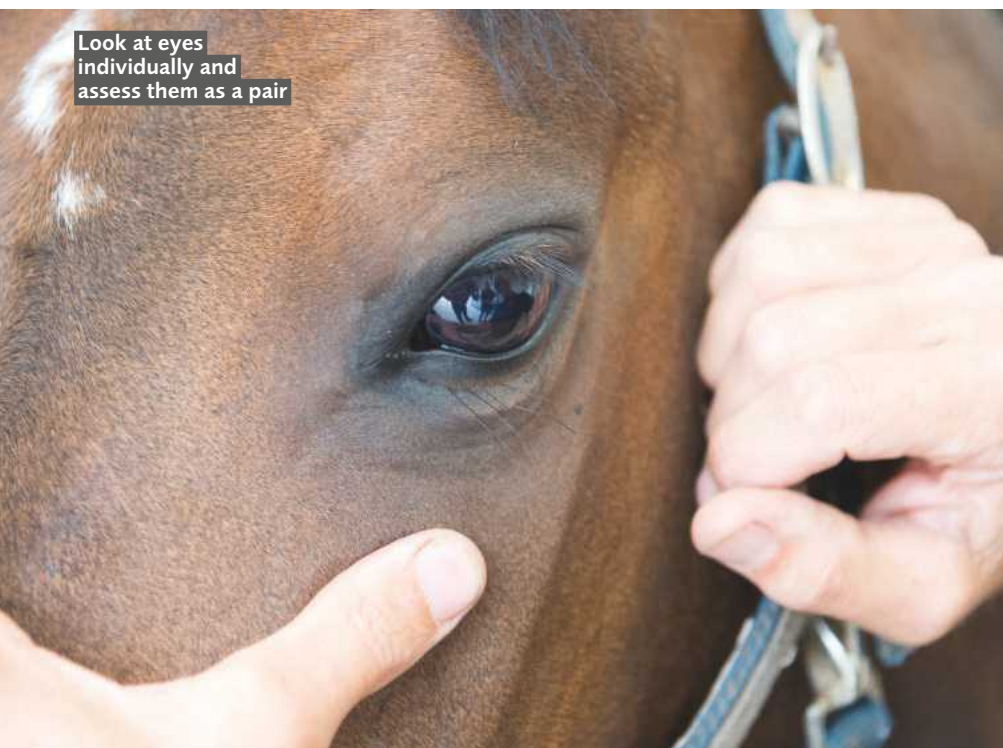
Any injuries to the eye should be taken seriously and dealt with promptly as they can deteriorate rapidly.

What seems like a minor scratch on the eye can, if not tended to, put the horse in danger of losing his sight.



A pinch test will tell you if the horse is dehydrated

Look at eyes individually and assess them as a pair



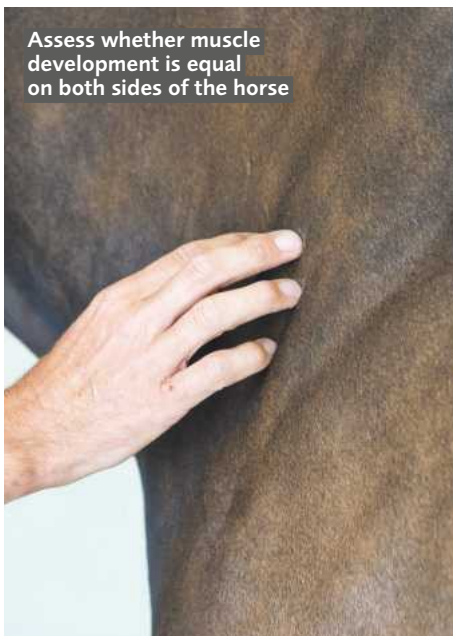
Coat: A healthy glow

Most healthy horses will have a fairly shiny look to their coat. In those that are unwell, the shine is lost and their skin becomes drier and scurfy. Failing to shed a winter coat can also indicate a health issue.

Skin can also give a guide to a horse's hydration. Pinch the skin on the neck and let go – it should return to a flat position almost immediately. If a horse is dehydrated, it may take three or four seconds for skin to settle back down to normal.

Rashes can be caused by insect bites. They normally cause localised lumps under the coat. If a rash is more widespread, it is usually an allergic reaction to something the horse has eaten or a contact allergy, such as a washing detergent used on a numnah.

Assess whether muscle development is equal on both sides of the horse



Muscles: Check for pain

Each horse has an individual sensitivity to touch, and the pain threshold will differ from horse to horse.

However, if your horse displays an unexpected reaction to you touching him, it may be down to muscle soreness. Again, it is vital to be aware of what is normal for your horse.

Asymmetry in musculature when comparing right to left can be another indicator of a problem, such as a long-term lameness or even localised nerve damage.

Haematomas (soft fluid lumps) on muscles are usually the result of an impact or injury.

Take them as a sign your horse has got himself into a scrape – it is worth having him checked over by a vet as there could be other problems you haven't noticed yet.

Glands: When to worry

Salivary glands can become quite large, particularly in spring.

This swelling, behind the jaw bone, can be firm but doesn't usually cause any discomfort and is thought to be the salivary glands reacting to proteins in grass.

Thyroid glands are located at the top of the throat and are often enlarged in older horses. Either one or two can increase in size but don't normally cause any problems.

Thyroid glands shouldn't be confused with the lymph nodes that are further forward, underneath the throat (see main image, page 76). Lymph nodes are difficult to feel in a healthy animal and enlargements suggest an infection somewhere in the head and should be investigated.

It's common for salivary glands to swell in spring



TIP from the TOP

Know the address and postcode of your yard, as well as directions, in case of a veterinary emergency.

Older horses may have enlarged thyroid glands



8 top tips for good health

- Make any changes to a horse's routine and diet gradually.
- Keep up to date with flu and tetanus vaccinations – prevention is better than cure.
- Do regular worm counts throughout the year, and worm accordingly.
- Ensure your horse's teeth, saddle and back are checked regularly.



- Grooming is an ideal time to take a close look at all parts of your horse.
- Be vigilant each day as you can guarantee the day you aren't is when something happens.
- Keep a diary of your checks so you can refer back to it and note any changes or when you first noticed a problem.
- Always have a stock of essential first aid equipment at the yard – for example, cohesive bandages, wound dressings, antiseptic cream, a thermometer and scissors – to prevent any delay in dealing with minor injuries or monitoring illness.





Feel the legs daily to spot issues early



Warm feet don't always signify a problem



Fluid in the joints could indicate injury or infection

Legs: Feel for heat and bumps

Check your horse's legs every day, so you can recognise any changes and act quickly if necessary. Feel for any lumps, bumps, cuts, swellings and heat around the joints and tendons that run down the back of the lower leg.

Joints and bones should be defined – loss of definition may be due to oedema (fluid collection). This could be the result of an injury, infection or lymphatic drainage issues.

Windgalls are swellings near the joints, which can be permanent fixtures and not cause a problem. But if swellings are new or there is an associated lameness it should be investigated.

Feet: Pick out daily

Horses often have variable heat in their hooves and this doesn't always indicate a problem. However, if heat is accompanied by a lameness or a strong digital pulse there may be an issue within the hoof capsule.

Picking out feet daily enables you to check for stones and any other foreign objects, and assess the frogs. Any black material, mucky discharge or smell coming from the frog may be caused by bacteria and fungi and could lead to thrush.

TIP from the TOP

Have the emergency contact details for your vet practice at the yard, and in your phone, so they are always there when you need them.

Watch the horse trotted up towards and away from you

Lameness: Identifying the lame limb

If you suspect your horse might be lame, ask someone to trot him up for you. If you are unsure of what you are looking for, trot him up for someone else to watch.

Look at the horse move from the side, front and behind. His head should stay level when he trots.

A forelimb lameness will be accompanied with an up and down movement of the head. The horse will lower his head as the sound limb strikes the ground and lift the head up as the leg with the discomfort lands, in order to ease the weight on it.

When looking from the side, check the evenness of the stride of each leg. A shorter stride on any leg indicates some form of discomfort.

From behind, look at the pelvis, which should move evenly on both sides.

When there is lameness in a hindlimb, the horse will often move the hip on the lame side higher than the sound side. 'Hip hiking', as it is known, takes a bit of practice to spot.

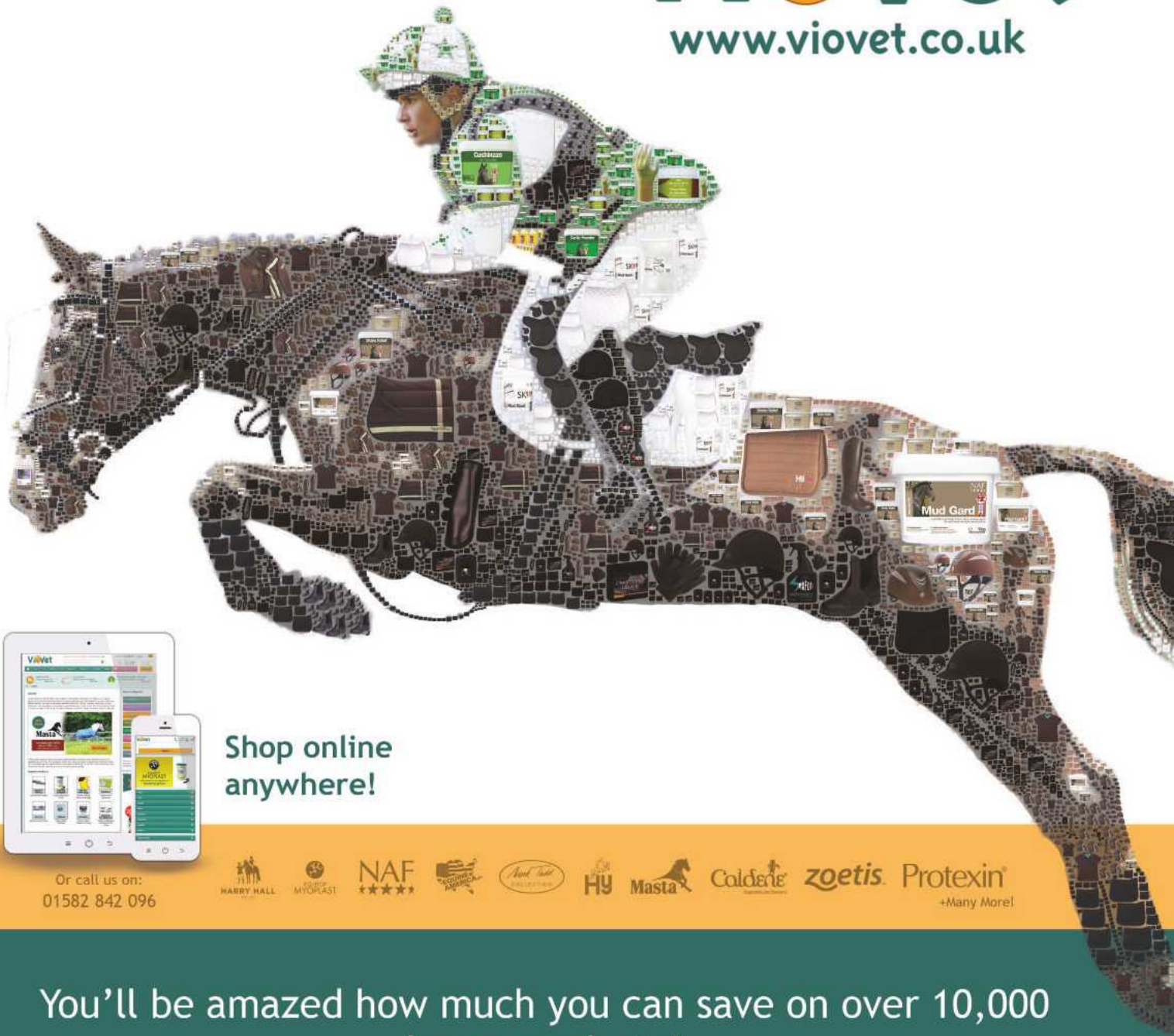
If a horse is lame on soft ground it normally indicates the issue lies within the soft tissue, such as a tendon or ligament. Lameness on hard ground implies the involvement of bone structures.

Lungeing your horse can amplify a lameness, making it easier to establish where the problem is coming from. However, it's best not to do it for too long as you may exacerbate the problem. ■



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Grooming kit that has been treated with an additive that kills harmful bacteria, to help reduce the risk of disease. Vale Brothers, £13.50 (body brush).



Quick Wraps Royal

With heat-reflective properties to aid recovery after exercise and keep legs warm in the stable. Back on Track, £80 per pair.

CARE PACKAGE

CHECK OUT OUR ROUND-UP OF PRODUCTS DESIGNED TO PROMOTE WELLBEING



Anti-Bacterial Skin Spray

A natural product to aid healing, it contains tea-tree plus herbal concentrates that have anti-bacterial, anti-fungal and anti-viral properties. Barrier Animal Health, around £6.20 for 200ml.



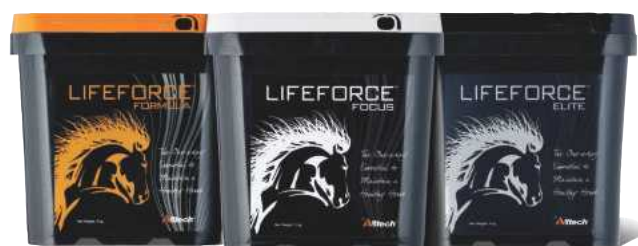
Horse & Rider First Aid Kit

A handy kit bag contains items to attend to minor equine injuries, plus a human travel first aid kit. Robinson Animal Healthcare, £24.95.



Natural Tea Tree Body Wipes

An alternative to bathing, the wipes help cleanse and soothe. Supreme Products, £9.50 for 100 wipes.



Lifeforce Supplements

A range of supplements designed to meet the needs of horses at every stage of life and optimise digestive health. Alltech, from £60 for 5kg.

Veterinary Surgical Scrub

An anti-microbial skin cleanser that can be applied to any part of the equine body. Nettex, £4.99 for 500ml.



Hypocare Range

A range of products formulated to kill bacterial, viral and fungal pathogens: Mud Fever (£17.50); Infections (£12.50); Cuts and Wounds (£8.50). Horseware.



NaturalintX products

A range of first aid items to enable you to care for minor wounds, cuts, abrasions and strains. NAF, from £1.99 (NaturalintX Wrap).



Equi Cool Down Body Wrap

For cooling relief after exercise or in hot weather. Immerse in cold water, wring out and apply. Shires, £149.



Cooling Leg Clay

A natural clay-based poultice for applying to minor knocks, strains and sprains. Safe-Care Equine, £9.99 for 1kg.



Lavender Liniment and Ice Blue

A liniment that can be used as a rub to warm-up muscles or a rinse for after exercise – £13.50. Ice Blue is a gel to soothe hot, tired or filled legs – £12.25. Carr & Day & Martin.



Seal to Heal

Protects wounds from flies in summer and aids mud fever healing in winter. Fly Away, £9.99.



Equi-N-ice Icesocks

For post-work cooling and as a cold treatment to reduce bruising and inflammation. Equiplus, £7.99 per pair.



CushCare Condition

High in protein and oil to promote weight gain and help maintain muscle mass. Dodson & Horrell, £14.99 for 18kg.

EquiSox Zipped Equine Compression Socks

Easy to fit, they apply a consistent, therapeutic level of compression. FMBs, £75 per pair.



A close-up photograph of a brown horse's head and neck, looking out from a white-framed window in a stable. The horse has a dark mane and is looking slightly to the left. The background inside the stable is a warm, orange-brown color.

In it for the long run

Vet **John Cousins** considers the impact of having a horse with a long-term health problem and suggests ways of surviving the experience

OUR EXPERT

John Cousins



John qualified as a vet from Liverpool University in 1983 and ran a successful vet practice in St Albans, Herts, from 1986 to 2010. He currently works as chief veterinary advisor to online retailer VioVet.

Most horses will suffer an illness or injury at some point in their life

Generally speaking, horses are a well-designed species evolution has treated favourably. That said, they are not immune to their fair share of medical conditions – many of which are chronic and require on-going care and investment.

If your horse has been diagnosed with an illness or has suffered an injury that is likely to have long-term implications, you are sure to be concerned about what the future holds.

Will you be able to afford your horse's care and will you be able to ride him again? Is there a possibility his medication could cause side effects?

Understanding the cause of a problem makes devising an effective management system far easier, and key to this is considering how things have changed from the wild to the domesticated horse.

Easing respiratory conditions

Nowadays, stabling a horse for a period of time is the norm, as is feeding highly concentrated feed, and it's common for some to be worked on unforgiving ground.

Their management is a far cry from the way wild equines live, giving rise to a range of issues that all require some level of adjustment, effort and expense to control.

Respiratory conditions are fairly common in horses and are often the result of allergies.

They can usually be managed quite easily without medication, simply by adjusting routines and avoiding routine stabling, as dust, spores and other airborne irritants are all inhaled in this environment.

Where possible, it is often best to manage chronic respiratory conditions by going back to nature. Fresh air out in the open can be a great help, but it isn't always easy keeping a horse away from the stable 24/7, especially in winter.

Also, if an allergy is caused by pollen or another summer trigger factor, stabling may be a key part of controlling the problem.

Lameness and joint issues

If your horse is diagnosed with chronic lameness, aside from sourcing the pain-relieving/anti-inflammatory medication required, solutions for overcoming associated boredom and digestive upsets need to be found if box rest or increased stable-time is required.

The horse is designed to graze continually as part of a herd, so a lack of forage and companionship can cause stress.

Some lameness can actually benefit from increased turnout – consult your vet for advice.

Joint health is an issue requiring management and work changes, as well as financial commitment.

Despite being designed to run fast, jump and change direction at speed, horses are highly

You can ask your vet for a prescription to enable you to buy medicines elsewhere



susceptible to injury, which can often necessitate extended periods of treatment.

When we work horses, we tend to do so over jumps and hard ground, which puts repetitive strain on joints and tendons, potentially leading to arthritis and other lameness issues.

Horses are worked harder and longer now than they ever used to be, and it may be this repetitive trauma to joints has a cumulative effect that takes a while to manifest.

Digestive disturbance

Chronic digestive problems, such as gastric ulcers, are another likely product of domestication, with today's horses eating an abnormally concentrated diet rather than a natural variety of grasses, plants and roughage. A natural lifestyle of constant grazing would ensure the stomach was never overloaded or starved.

Chronic issues such as ulcers amount to a lot, both emotionally and financially.

Where possible it is often best to manage chronic conditions by returning to nature.

Many medical conditions seem to be helped by adding herbal supplements to the diet, similar forms of which would have been present in natural diets.

But some issues aren't so simply managed and providing the medication your horse needs for a healthy, active and pain-free existence can set you back a small fortune each month.

A life-long problem

It could be that your horse's injury or illness requires life-long management, which warrants significant investment on the owner's part.

Adjusting diet, routines and general care patterns all takes time and money, which can easily contribute to feelings of stress.

If an injury is serious, it could mean you can no longer ride your horse, which raises the question of what to do next. Can you afford to keep him,

Supply and demand

While prescription medicines and supplies such as bandages and wound dressings are available through your vet, you do have the choice to source products elsewhere, which could save you money.

For medicines, you need your vet to supply a prescription. For other products, ask your vet to provide a list of what you need.

If you shop online, items can be delivered to your door. Some online companies offer a service that allows you to schedule regular deliveries of medication for when your horses need it. This avoids you forgetting to order in new supplies.

knowing he may never be ridden again but will always depend on medication? Can medication keep him sound enough to lead a fulfilling life?

These are questions needing careful consideration, and your vet can give you some advice on your options.

Horses rely on the strength of all their limbs, and once one is compromised through injury or illness, the whole body becomes vulnerable.

It is also worth noting that the long-term use of some pain-relieving medications can have implications for a horse's health. Before deciding against your horse taking them, weigh up the pros – your horse has an increased chance of living an active life – against the cons – he may develop side-effects in the future. ■

TIP from the TOP

Following a change to laws governing the sale of prescription medications, you can ask a vet for a prescription, giving you the option to buy elsewhere.

Smarter shopping

John is the chief veterinary advisor to online retailer VioVet, which stocks prescription and non-prescription medication, supplements and wormers, bandages and dressings, saddles and tack, and a selection of competition and leisure riding wear.

The company's team includes veterinary nurses and SQPs, who can advise customers. Visit: www.viovet.co.uk; tel: (01582) 842 096.



Health watch

Discover more about an exciting horse health campaign that aims to minimise illness and disease in Britain's equine population

Equine welfare is paramount to everyone involved with horses. With this in mind, Keeping Britain's Horses Healthy (KBHH) – a high-profile nationwide campaign, supported by BEVA (British Equine Veterinary Association) and the AHT (Animal Health Trust) – is launching Horse Health Week.

During this special week, which runs from 21-28 September, KBHH will be promoting Seven Pillars of responsible horse ownership.

The Seven Pillars are:-

1. Infectious disease prevention;
2. Parasite control;
3. Nutrition and weight management;
4. Teeth and dentistry;
5. Hoof care and farriery;
6. Wellbeing, including environmental management, breeding and end of life care;
7. Taking on a new horse.

Infectious disease prevention

Vaccination is key in preventing infectious disease – it helps protect the individual horse and reduces the ability of disease to spread to other horses.

Information and advice on infectious diseases will be highlighted during Horse Health Week, including how they can best be prevented.

Some of the diseases being covered are equine influenza (flu), tetanus, strangles, herpes and exotic diseases.

Information will be presented on biosecurity, including quarantine best-practice, and on vaccination and herd immunity.

KBHH strongly believes in the concept of herd immunity and will strive to improve vaccination uptake to help protect the entire equine population, prioritising diseases that are widespread in Britain.

All yards should have a quarantine policy for new arrivals



**Regular hoof care
is essential**

Hoof care and farriery

Hoof care is an important aspect of horse ownership but is an area that can get overlooked in an owner's busy day-to-day schedule. During the week of activity, KBHH will look at basic routine foot care, showing how to establish what is normal and how to check for potential problems, such as thrush, heat, punctures, cracks. Together with vets and farriery partners, it will be offering practical advice on how problems can be avoided.

Modern pasture and forage has been shown to be deficient in certain nutrients, particularly quality protein and some minerals.

The campaign nutrition partner, Baileys Horse Feeds, will be sharing advice on forms of supplementary feeding to supply these essential nutrients and provide a fully balanced diet.

In addition, its nutrition experts will be looking at how to optimise weight control, basic feeding dos and don'ts and advising on appropriate feed for the workload undertaken.

Teeth and dentistry

Many horses suffer silently from dental disease so it is important to have regular check-ups to ensure their mouth is healthy.

Another key message that KBHH will be aiming to communicate in Horse Health Week, is that with youngsters it is sensible to start routine dental care in the first year of life, with check-ups every year thereafter. However, once a horse reaches 12 years of age, the time between check-ups should be reduced to every six months.

General wellbeing

While wellbeing is concerned with the horse's overall physical health, you also need to consider mental, emotional and environmental impacts on the horse.

Horse Health Week will investigate quality of life issues and tackle the difficult subject of end-of-life care.

**Did you
KNOW?**

To achieve an effective level of herd immunity against equine flu, between 60 and 70 per cent of our horses need to be vaccinated.

A further subject to be explored, will be that of responsible breeding.

**Taking on a
new horse**

Getting a new horse can be a daunting time, and new owners may have lots of questions they need answered.

Horse Health Week is the ideal time to pose these questions and get sensible, knowledgeable answers on pre-purchase examinations (vettings), passports, microchipping and horse insurance.

Consideration of the Seven Pillars in the every-day care of your new horse will ensure you are off to a great start in becoming a caring, responsible owner.

During Horse Health Week it's not only the individual owner who can benefit from an increased awareness of the all-round benefits of a preventative approach to equine healthcare.

Livery yards and riding schools will benefit from a healthier population of horses in a yard, leading to an environment with happy horses, happy owners and a positive yard reputation.



**Campaign vet
Nicola Snowden
will share tips**

**A special week
aims to improve
horse health**

Parasite control

We are all aware of the need to protect our horses from parasites, but gone are the days when we would simply worm our horse to a regular pattern and forget about it.

As Horse Health Week will show, no single active ingredient is effective against all types and stages of worms, so it is vital horses are treated with the right wormer at the right time of year through a targeted worming programme.

A targeted approach includes treatment for encysted and inhibited small redworm larvae, tapeworm and bots. Horses are then wormed during the grazing season, if required, based on the results of a faecal worm egg count.

**Nutrition and weight
management**

It goes without saying that a balanced diet is crucial to help ensure a fit and healthy horse.

● To find out more about Horse Health Week, KBHH and participating veterinary practices, visit: www.healthyhorses.co.uk.



Change for the better

Vet Becky Lees shares her tips for helping your horse cope with the challenges that summer brings

Breathe easier

Breathing issues are commonly seen in winter when horses are stabled more often, however summer can also bring its challenges.

Recurrent airway obstruction (RAO) is an allergy to dust or spores in hay or bedding.

Summer pasture associated RAO produces the same symptoms of coughing, exercise intolerance and nasal discharge, however it is triggered by pollen spores in the air.

This means horses will usually only be affected during the spring and summer. Your vet will be able to diagnose it and decide on the best form of treatment.



Slip, slap slop

Sunburn is especially a problem for horses with pink skin, which lacks the dark pigment that helps protect against UV rays.

Pink skin around the eyes is of particular concern as this is linked with an increased risk of cancer.

A face mask should be worn during summer by all horses with pink skin around their eyes to protect them.

Pink skin on the muzzle is also prone to burning. This can be protected using high-factor sun creams – there are long-lasting creams available that are especially formulated for horses. Or you can fit a mask that extends down to cover the muzzle.

Ensure all horses have access to shade, so they can get some respite from the sun.



Beat the bugs

Flies and midges can be a real problem for many horses over the summer, especially those that suffer from sweet itch.

Fly masks and rugs give the best protection, but to enhance this further spray fly repellent over your horse's fly rug after you have put it on.

Salves and creams can be applied to problem areas as midges aren't able to bite through them.

Look for a product that has a repellent action, is soothing and weather-proof.

Products containing Neem oil are particularly useful.

Avoid hard ground

Hard ground can cause hooves to dry out, become brittle and break up more easily.

Regular farriery, conditioning hoof dressings and a balanced diet are your best defence to counteract this.

Exercising horses on hard ground will also increase concussion on their legs and can lead to injury or wear and tear damage over time.

Horses with poor conformation are particularly at risk, as legs aren't loaded evenly.

Pick ground carefully, especially with fast work or jumping, to help your horse stay sound. ■



An all-weather surface is ideal for fast work when the ground is hard

Rising to the challenge

Master saddler Kay Hastilow considers the problems encountered when fitting saddles to horses and ponies with challenging conformation



Most difficulties
can be overcome by
a qualified saddle fitter

Much has been written over the last few years about the importance of a well-fitted saddle. As a result, most riders believe it's always possible to achieve the perfect fit.

They think if you get the right tree and panel and position the girth straps 'just so', everything will fit in place.

Sadly, this is not always the case. Saddle fitters are often presented with a horse that has challenging conformation.

While it may be possible to get a saddle specially made, the price may be too prohibitive.

In these situations, a saddler has to call upon all of their skills to achieve what may be the 'least bad' option.

Luckily, many difficulties can be overcome by a Society of Master Saddlers qualified saddle fitter, who will have the knowledge of what is possible and how this can be achieved.

Balancing act

If I ask people to tell me what they think 'challenging conformation' is, high withers are always the first to be mentioned, followed by overweight, round ponies.

Both are a challenge, although these days the high-withered horse is easily catered for as saddle designs for this shape have improved over the years.

But there are many other conformation problems we may come across during a saddle fitting.

Horses can be uphill or croup high. This will make balancing the saddle – so the rider is sat in the centre and in the right position without effort – somewhat harder to achieve.

Uphill horses require deeper rear gussets and enough room in the centre of the panel, so as to prevent bridging (placing too much pressure on the withers and loin).

Slim rear gussets and a tree shape that enables you to keep the pommel clear of the spine – but as close as you can get – will have the best result for horses that are croup high.



Get into the groove

Few take much notice of the position of the 'girth groove' – where the girth will naturally lie on a horse – but this can be very influential.

If you sit a saddle on the horse and lift the flap so you can see where the girth straps lie in relation to his girth groove, it is quite revealing.

If the horse's groove is forward, the saddle will be inclined to run forward until the straps and girth line-up vertically. This means the saddle is then sitting into – or on – the shoulders.

It is a position not appreciated by the horse or pony and may well lead to him bucking or humping his back. This will, of course, push the saddle further forward.

One solution is to fit a 'point strap' (a girth strap fitted to the point of the tree).

This will be further forward than standard straps, which will help to set the saddle a little further back. A curved, shaped girth can also help, as the buckles on these sit further back than the centre of the girth.

It may also be necessary to use some form of grip pad to help hold the saddle in place or, you could use a crupper. ►



Photo: www.shutterstock.com/Eliya Vatel

Horse sense Saddle fitting

There is nothing wrong with this, provided the crupper is well made with a rounded, smooth dock and is introduced slowly, perhaps in the stable with a roller until the horse is used to it.

Folded nylon cruppers, put on at the start of Pony Club camp, are just going to be a disaster.

A loaded question

The shoulders of the horse are rarely given any consideration by the rider, and yet they are hugely influential to the fit of a saddle.

'Loaded' shoulders – where there is excessive muscle development – may have been thought of, but this is just one of many problems.

The majority of horses are uneven, to a greater or lesser extent, with regards to the height, depth or position of their shoulders.

One shoulder may be considerably more prominent than the other, set higher up or further back. Sometimes you have all three problems on one horse!

I have, on occasion, seen shoulders set so far back that the saddle tree points have to sit on the shoulder blades or the saddle will be sitting on the horse's loins or quarters.

The result of uneven shoulders is often that the saddle will be pushed over to one side, especially at the back, so it is sitting on the edge of, or right across the spine.

This is particularly true if the saddle is a GP or jumping style, as the panel will sit on the shoulders and so have a greater influence.

This is not so much of a problem if the client wants a dressage saddle which tend to be cut back at the shoulder.

Nowadays there are some saddles with straight, short panels where the knee roll is set on, or under the flap. There is then a support on the sweat flap, underneath the saddle flap.

These work well, but are a little different to ride in, and will require you to get used to the feel. I find that horses love them, however, which should encourage you to make the effort.

A horse's shoulders greatly influence the fit of a saddle



The alternative is to adjust the flocking, or have an adjustable air-filled panel at the front, so you can accommodate the larger shoulder. A balance strap can then be fitted to one side, to prevent the drift across the back of the horse.

Size matters

The final challenge facing saddle fitters today, which I am going to address (although there are many, many more), is the length of the horse's back and the size of the rider.

We all know that a short back is good conformation, but over the last 20 years or so this seems to have been taken to extremes.

The area of the back that can deal with pressure and carry the weight of a rider is from the back of the shoulder blade to the last rib.

This is where the tree of the saddle has to sit – it should be no further forward and no further back.

While the panel of the saddle may go a little beyond that area, the frame of the

tree must not, or it will cause damage to the horse's back.

An issue may arise when dealing with a taller or larger rider.

It is common for us to be asked to fit a saddle for a horse, of any height, whose back length allows for a 17-inch saddle – at most.

Then we look at the rider, who may well own up to being 13 or 14 stone (75 to 90kg), and they need an 18-inch or 19-inch saddle.

The seat can be made wider to accommodate the rider – 11-inch or 12-inch – so what can't go back can go sideways. But the horse has to have a broad enough rib cage to support this extra width of tree.

While this may work on a Highland or cob, it won't be so successful on a Thoroughbred.

We can also cut the flap forward a bit more to allow extra room for the rider's leg. This can be successful, as long as the horse doesn't have loaded shoulders.

Early warning

As you can see, achieving the perfect fit is not always easy or, in some cases, possible.

This is when we talk of the 'least bad' option, and we have to do the best we can.

There will even be occasions where achieving any workable fit is just not possible at all.

Luckily, this is rare but it does happen. I recommend asking a qualified saddle fitter to look at a horse before you buy him.


It might save you some problems – and considerable expense – further down the line. ■

The area able to carry a rider is from the back of the shoulder blade to the last rib



Find a fitter

Thanks to Kay Hastilow, Master saddler and registered qualified saddle fitter, and the Society of Master Saddlers for their help with this feature. Details about the Society, and a list of qualified fitters and saddlers, can be found at www.mastersaddlers.co.uk; tel (01449) 711 642.

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THE VET REPORT

Rescue mission

Horses can get themselves into all kinds of sticky situations. Here, vet Tom Beech looks at what happens during an emergency rescue



OUR EXPERT

Tom Beech BVSc MRCVS set up Rowan Veterinary Services and is currently studying to become a veterinary equine osteopath.

While the majority of equine emergencies are related to illness and minor accidents, sometimes vets are called out to attend incidents of a more dramatic kind.

Horses have a knack of getting themselves into all sorts of sticky situations, and sometimes they need more than a vet to help them out.

Over the years, I have attended to horses trapped in ditches, down cattle grids, in horse trailers and in rivers. I have also seen horses escape onto motorways and bypasses.

Fortunately, in a lot of these situations, the horses involved escaped relatively unscathed, but I'm sure we've all heard stories where there has been a more tragic end.

Sometimes, the situation is taken out of our hands and the fate of the horse can be down to sheer luck.

However, in a lot of cases there is plenty that can be done, by the owner and rescue services, to increase the chances of a happy ending.

Assessing the situation

If you discover your horse trapped in anything from a muddy ditch to a swimming pool, it will be hugely distressing.

However, the calmer you remain, the more use you will be. Not panicking means the actions you

take will increase the chances of getting your horse out of his predicament.

Your first action should be to assess the situation. This should always be done with your own safety as a priority – there is no point adding yourself to the casualty list.

While considering the situation, you need to look at the following two things:

The current condition of your horse: Is the horse stood up or lying down? Are there any obvious injuries that may prevent him moving or getting out on his own? Can you see any areas where he is stuck? Does he seem calm or alarmed? Does he look exhausted or does he still have energy?

Surrounding dangers: Is he in water or mud? Is he on stable ground or is the water/mud moving? Is he submerged? Is he on a road, or is he stuck in a trailer on a busy road? Is there anything nearby that may cause him more harm or scare him into another situation?

Having gathered some immediate information about your horse's situation, you need to contact



“Assess the situation and contact the relevant professionals”

the professionals. In a lot of situations, this will include your vet and the fire brigade.

Should your emergency involve the highways in any way, you will also require the assistance of the traffic police.



The fire brigade has expert teams for water rescue



Gelderlander Ousi, a former Queen's carriage horse, got himself into deep water

They will close the road, if necessary, in order to keep other motorists away and secure the area.

When talking to the vet and the fire brigade on the phone, be sure to communicate the scenario clearly.

They need to know where you are and a brief idea of the situation. This will enable the vet to bring the correct medication and the fire brigade to organise suitable equipment.

The fire brigade should have expert teams that can be utilised for water rescue, as well as specialised rescue equipment they can call on wherever they are in the UK.

By giving the right information, they may be able to get the correct equipment there straight away, which will save valuable time.

Most fire brigades are well-rehearsed in horse rescues, but the vet is integral to the management of the horse throughout the operation.

During all the rescues I have assisted with, one of my key roles has been to ensure the fire team have kept the horse's welfare as a top priority at all times, and made sure no further damage occurred.

It's likely the fire team will not have had regular experience with horses, so the vet is an important link to ensure the correct handling of the horse to minimise stress and injury.

Often, owners will call a local farmer with a tractor to assist with the rescue of their horse from a ditch or cattle grid.

While this approach has been successful on many occasions, be warned that in more serious cases you will also need the vet and emergency services for their professional experience.

Injuries can occur when rescuing horses – particularly if they panic – so it is important that all people attending are appropriately trained.

Staying safe

While waiting for the emergency services and vet, do not do anything that will put yourself in danger.

While it is incredibly stressful to see your horse wounded or distressed, acting rashly can result in a serious, even fatal injury.

The horse is likely to be in an adrenaline-fuelled flight response and may not consider you at all. This can lead to you getting kicked, crushed or worse.

Your presence, however, can be soothing to the horse, as can food or treats and the sound of your voice.

While staying at a safe distance from the horse, you can be of great use. Time can be well spent preparing the aftercare for his hopeful release.

If, for instance, your horse has spent a long, cold night in a muddy ditch or a river then ►

Once the horse is safe and checked over by the vet, the aftercare begins



arranging feed, a warm stable, towels and rugs can be just as important in the road to recovery as the vet's medication.

When the vet and fire brigade do arrive they will almost certainly take full control of the situation.

However, any relevant information about the general health of the horse should always be relayed to the vet, such as recent conditions or current ailments.

It is wise to make both parties aware you are available to help, if necessary. Otherwise keep yourself well clear when not needed.

As the owner, you will be kept fully informed of progress made throughout the rescue.

In some cases, the vet will sedate your horse to help with the extraction. This is usually when there are certain tasks that need to be carried out and we don't want the horse to fight or struggle.

Sometimes the decision is made to not use sedation, in order to allow him to use his own strength to assist with the rescue.

I have also been involved in situations where the horse wasn't sedated because he was too weak and cold.

Post-rescue care

Once the rescue team has freed your horse from the danger and moved him to safety, the vet will set about thoroughly examining him.

They will look for any physical injuries that were not obvious at the time, and check that his

heart, lungs, guts and body temperature are within the normal range.

It is usually at this point that the aftercare begins and you become a key participant.

The vet may medicate your horse with antibiotics and anti-inflammatories, depending on the situation. In some cases your horse may be put on an intravenous drip. In other instances wounds will need tending to as well.

Preventing accidents

Accidents do happen, but a lot of situations can be avoided.

I strongly recommend checking your paddocks regularly for gaps in fencing and if you spot any hazards, either remove them or fence around them.

Also, ensure your trailer is roadworthy with good tyres, sturdy flooring and appropriate structural integrity.

All too often, poor trailer care has led to injuries to horses when they are being transported.



In all situations, however, there will be the need to stable the horse and allow him to rest and feed.

If he is very weak, making a mash or in some cases a porridge (Ready Brek works a treat!) will help get much-needed energy and warmth back into his system.

It's not surprising that a lot of horses will be either in a state of shock or exhausted, so make sure they are warm and dry and then left to rest.

Just as a final note should your horse ever need rescuing – please ensure you thank the fire brigade for attending.

It's something that can be overlooked with all the emotions of freeing your horse, but remember that without their effort it may have ended differently.

They provide an excellent service and are always there to help. ■



The vet and fire brigade will take control of the situation

VET DIARY

Baby boom

Our vet columnist Nicola Thompson focuses on foaling, with some tips on what to expect

Having a foal is an exciting time and, if your mare's due date is getting closer, you are sure to be keeping a close eye on her.

There are three stages to a foaling. During stage one, the mare will exhibit signs that are similar to colic – she will be unsettled and get up and lie down and occasionally kick at her belly. She is likely to lose her appetite.

This can last several hours, especially if the mum-to-be is disturbed.

The second stage is delivery of the foal. The mare's 'waters' will break and the foal should emerge within 20 minutes.

Foals are ideally born in a swan dive position, with the head resting on the forelegs. If the mare is struggling or you only see one leg or a head, call your vet immediately. Most mares foal without help but if she gets into difficulty, speed is essential as both mum and baby will be at risk.

Once the foal is on the floor he should breathe within 30 seconds – to help, you can clear the mucus from his nose and mouth.

Don't break the umbilical cord as this happens naturally as the mare or foal stands.

The foal's navel should be dipped in iodine solution to help prevent infection. His mum should show interest in him straight away

and will usually start licking him clean. Try to leave the mare and foal to bond.

Most foals stand within 90 minutes and have a strong instinct to suckle. They should have their first drink within two to three hours.

The first milk they drink is important. It's called colostrum and contains all the antibodies a foal needs from his dam.

Without this, the foal will not have any protection against disease for the first few



OUR EXPERT

Nicola Thompson is a qualified vet who works for Wright & Moreton in Cheshire, a member practice of XL Equine. She has ridden since she was a child.



Surprise, surprise

You may not be planning to breed a foal, but even experienced horse people have been

"The first milk a foal drinks contains antibodies to protect him from disease"

months of his life, until his own immune system develops. If a foal isn't suckling, call your vet.

The foal should also pass droppings fairly quickly – first droppings (meconium) are quite firm and dark green in colour.

Foals can become constipated and some need an enema. If you see a foal pass soft, light-coloured droppings they will already have passed the meconium.

Night-time appearance

The third stage of foaling involves passing the afterbirth (placenta).

If this hasn't happened within six hours, a vet will need to assist, as retaining it can be life-threatening. Inflammation of the uterus leads to a response which can trigger laminitis.

Once the placenta has passed it should be examined for tears. Place it in a bag for your vet to examine when they visit to check the foal.

Most foalings occur between 10pm and 4am, so foals should be up and about before you get to the yard. They should be alert, but remember babies do sleep a lot.

caught out after buying a mare that was secretly expecting.

Imagine arriving at the yard in the morning to muck out your horse's stable, and finding her stood happily alongside a newborn foal. It would be quite a surprise!

This scenario is not as uncommon as you might think and it's something two of my clients went through.

If you are buying a mare who looks overweight or whose belly swells after you have bought her, consider that she could be pregnant.

In equines, the gestation period lasts 11 months so it isn't always very new horses that can be harbouring a surprise.

If you suspect that a mare is in foal, or is foaling, you should contact your veterinary practice for advice. ■

Next issue: In her next column (October issue, on sale 27 August), Nicola discusses the potentially fatal condition grass sickness.

There are three stages to foaling



Q&A

HORSECARE

OUR EXPERT PANEL



CHLOE BRISTOW

Chloe is a veterinary surgeon, specialising in nutrition. She is the company vet for Dodson & Horrell. Visit: www.dodsonandhorrell.com.



STEPHANIE SOSKIN

Stephanie is a BHSII who is experienced in running yards. She competes regularly in showing and is the author of *What Not to Wear on a Horse*.



CAROLYN HENDERSON

Horse owner and journalist Carolyn has written a number of books on horse care, tack and showing. She is the author of the novel *Beside Me*.

Can I leave my horse tied up to the trailer?

Q Is it safe to leave a horse tied up outside a trailer or lorry at a show, or is it better to put them inside?

Kim Collier, by email

STEPHANIE SAYS If a horse is calm and well behaved when tied up, it is fine to do so while he is being groomed and tacked up, or cooled down after his class. But I would not leave a horse tied up outside a lorry or trailer.

No matter how good a horse is, he only needs something to spook him and he could break away, and injure himself or others.

Many shows and societies forbid horses being tied up and left outside, so why take the risk?

I would recommend you safely tie your horse up inside your transport. If he's finished his work he should be happy tucking into a haynet.

On a warm day, and if it's safe to do so, the ramp can be left down and the windows open, but remember boxes and trailers can get hot quickly. So do not leave him unattended for too long.

It is safer to leave your horse on the lorry or trailer after competing



Feeding a pony with Cushing's

Q My 18-year-old pony has been diagnosed with Cushing's. How should I adjust his diet in the future?

Name and address withheld

CHLOE SAYS Horses with Cushing's syndrome [now referred to as PPID or Pituitary Pars Intermedia Dysfunction] have very specific dietary requirements.

I would ensure your pony's diet contains good quality protein with essential amino acids to help maintain his muscles – horses with Cushing's are prone to muscle wastage.

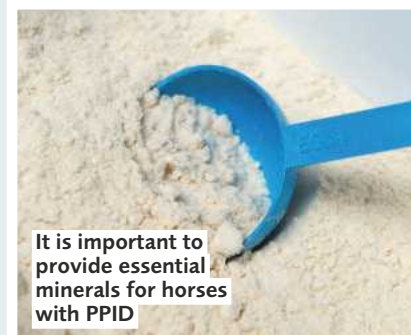
It is also vital he receives all his daily vitamins, minerals and the antioxidants vitamin E and selenium.

These will keep him healthy and support the immune system, which can sometimes struggle in horses with this condition.

He also needs a diet which contains less than 10 per cent starch, as Cushing's disease may predispose him to developing laminitis.

If he needs extra calories to maintain his weight, these should come from fibre and oil, rather than cereals.

I would consult an equine nutritionist who will be able to give you advice on meeting your pony's specific needs.



It is important to provide essential minerals for horses with PPID

What is this noseband?

Q I have seen some horses being ridden in what looks like a double noseband, with two bands going around the nose. What is this, and what's its purpose?

Justine Moore, by email

CAROLYN SAYS The Dy'on noseband aims to combine a cavesson and drop noseband, but in a more effective way than a flash.

Each can be adjusted separately making it more stable, as the cavesson part can't be dragged down the face. This happens if the cavesson element of a flash is not substantial.

The manufacturer says there is less chance of the corners of the mouth being pinched



The Dy'on combines a cavesson and drop

than when using a drop noseband.

It can be used for showjumping and cross-country, but not for dressage.

Be careful to adjust it so the horse can still flex his jaws, because if he can't do that he won't be comfortable.

If he can't relax his lower jaw, he can't come on to the bit.

It may not be as comfortable as a high-ring grackle for a young horse cutting teeth.

Some trainers use a high-ring grackle as standard to minimise pressure on the cheek teeth. It also prevents the horse opening his mouth too wide and discourages him from drawing his tongue back under the bit.



It is safer to wear gloves when lungeing and leading

TIP from the TOP

When travelling horses take a spare tail bandage. This saves having to roll up and apply a dirty bandage for the journey home.

What type of breastplate?

Q I want to get a breastplate for my horse, but there are so many different types. Which one is suitable for hacking and hunter trials?

Becky Pitt, Cirencester, Glos

STEPHANIE SAYS The main purpose of a breastplate is to prevent the saddle from slipping back.

Some horses' conformation (those that are herring gutted – the body goes narrow towards the hindquarters). require a breastplate to secure the saddle.



A five-point breastplate is popular in eventing

Leadrope safety query

Q Some leadropes have a loop at the bottom to slip your hand through. Is it safe to do that when leading a horse?

Clara Taylor, by email

CAROLYN SAYS I don't understand why leadropes and lunge reins are made with hand loops, as I believe putting your hand through them makes you vulnerable.

I know someone who was badly injured when a horse took off while being lunged. She tried to

stop him by holding the rein loop with both hands and it twisted round them, resulting in her being dragged.

There is also the chance you will let the looped end of a lunge-rein trail on the floor and accidentally put your foot through it.

However, I know some trainers are happy to use hand loops.

Either way, it's safer to wear gloves when lunging and leading – and you should never deliberately wrap a rope or rein round your hand.

He kicks his water bucket

Q My horse is on box rest and keeps knocking his water bucket over. How can I prevent this?

Brenda Ford, Nottingham

STEPHANIE SAYS You could try putting the water bucket inside an old tyre or two, which should keep it upright.

There are buckets available that have a flat side and can be hooked onto the wall at a variable height (pictured, right).

Heavyweight tubs can be used, but when half empty these can still be tipped over.

If you have a corner manger, a bucket could be placed inside it. Or you could buy a plastic corner manger, which aren't expensive, and use it for your horse's water supply. Simply fill it via a bucket or hose.

Drink mangers are also available with plugs for easy cleaning and draining.



Hanging water buckets can help prevent spills

Otherwise, if there is a stable available with an automatic water dispenser, ask if you can move your horse into it. But make sure he knows how to use it first.

A traditional 'hunting' breastplate comprises a neckstrap, with two narrow straps that fasten to each side of the front of the saddle.

A wider strap then goes between the horse's front legs to the girth. Martingale attachments can be fitted – either running or standing.

A popular alternative is the five-point breastplate (see picture), which comprises the neck strap and two top straps, plus two further straps that fit to the girth straps.

They often come with removable sheepskin pressure pads and additional elastic, which goes across the front of the horse's chest and attaches to the girth straps on either side.

These are usually lighter in weight and useful for youngsters and racehorses, to assist in keeping the saddle in the right place. They are also often used in eventing.

Correct fitting of a breastplate is vital, as it must not restrict the horse's movement.

Q&A

HORSECARE

OUR EXPERT PANEL



BECKY LEES

Becky is an experienced vet who enjoys all aspects of equine medicine. She is vet advisor to Nettex. In her spare time, Becky rides her horse, Markie.



JUSTINE HARRISON

As a certified equine behaviourist, Justine uses the science of behaviour to help owners understand and solve a wide range of issues with their horses.



CLARE BARFOOT

Clare is a registered equine nutritionist and research and development manager for Spillers. She has a specialist knowledge of laminitis. Visit: www.spillers-feeds.com.

Navicular diagnosis concern

Q After a diagnosis of navicular in my gelding, I'm feeling despondent. What advice can you give me, in terms of whether he can continue working?

Name and address withheld

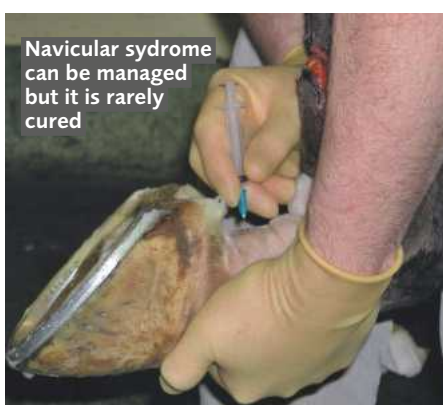
BECKY SAYS Navicular syndrome is a common cause of lameness, due to pain from the navicular bone in the foot and the surrounding soft tissues.

Poor foot conformation (especially long toes and low heels) predispose a horse to navicular, as extra strain is placed on the heel area.

With increased availability of advanced imaging techniques we now realise navicular syndrome is much more complex than first thought.

Multiple types of injury to the structures in the heel area cause degenerative processes, which result in navicular syndrome. This means treatment of the condition isn't straightforward.

It is rarely completely cured, but many cases are managed well enough for the horse to come sound.



Navicular syndrome can be managed but it is rarely cured

Corrective trimming and shoeing by an experienced farrier is critical to optimise balance and reduce the forces exerted on the navicular heel area during movement.

A team effort is needed between your vet and farrier to decide what would suit your horse.

Worrying in-season behaviour

Q When my mare is in season, she will nip at the gelding in the paddock next door. She also squeals and double barrels the gate when he comes over to say hello. How should I manage the behaviour?

Wendy Edge, by email

JUSTINE SAYS It is natural for a mare's behaviour to alter during her reproductive cycle and individual horses will behave in different ways.

When mares come into season (for around three to seven days), they are usually more interested in males and can be easily distracted.

When out of season (usually around 14 days) the mare is not 'receptive' to males, so can be sensitive and appear grumpy.

For example, she may put her ears back when groomed, or kick out at another horse if they come near.

I suggest you keep a diary and note how your mare behaves during her cycle. If she is difficult to manage, or her cycle isn't regular, ask your vet to examine her to ensure there are no physical issues causing her behaviour.

If you want to avoid this behaviour altogether and are worried she may injure herself or the other horse, move her to a paddock away from the gelding at the difficult time in her cycle.

However, these behaviours often only occur when mares and geldings are separated, so turning them out together may be worth considering.

A qualified equine behaviourist could advise you how to approach changing your mare's management.

How can I keep weight on?

Q My ex-racer is prone to getting stressed and, when he does, weight seems to drop off him. I'm doing my best to keep him calm and relaxed, but how should I handle his feeding?

Laura Mortimer, by email



Oil contains 2.5 times the calories of cereals

CLARE SAYS With horses that easily drop weight it is important their diet provides as many calories as possible.

One way to provide safe, concentrated calories is to give feeds with high levels of oil.

Oil contains 2.5 times the calorie level as the same weight of cereals, so is very good for building condition, while not requiring the horse to eat large amounts of bulky feed.

Look for feeds with low levels of cereal starch that are high in oil and fibre. Lowering the reliance on conditioning cereals can prevent excitable and spooky behaviour.

This increases energy expenditure and is undesirable in a horse that needs weight gain.

The other good energy source is fibre, especially highly digestible fibre sources, such as alfalfa, soya hulls and sugar beet.

You should also provide plenty of good-quality hay or haylage.



How should I treat fly bites?

Prevention is better than cure with fly bites

Q My horse reacts badly to fly bites and some swell up to big lumps. I assume they are painful, so how should I treat them?

Bev Porter, Colchester, Essex

BECKY SAYS Fly bites will cause your horse discomfort and they will also be itchy, especially if they swell up.

Soothing creams will give your horse some relief and should be all that is needed.

However, if this is not enough to provide relief, then your vet can prescribe a cream that will help reduce the swelling and reduce the itch.

The best solution is to prevent your horse being bitten in the first place. A combined approach is generally most effective.

I recommend investing in a fly rug, for all-over protection, as well as a long-lasting insect repellent to keep biting flies and other insects away from your horse.

Why does she curl her lip?

Q My young mare often curls up her top lip. Isn't this something only stallions do?

Jess Baxter, by email

TIP from the TOP

Foot pain is the most common cause of lameness, so don't be surprised if your vet examines your horse's foot, even if you think it's the shoulder.

JUSTINE SAYS Curling the top lip is known as the Flehmen response. It happens when a horse finds an interesting smell – he will raise his head, extend his neck and roll his top lip back, showing the front teeth.

After the horse has inhaled the smell, the top lip is curled up to close the nasal passages and trap the scent within the 'vomeronasal' organ.



Curling the top lip is known as the Flehmen response

Why are his withers twitching?

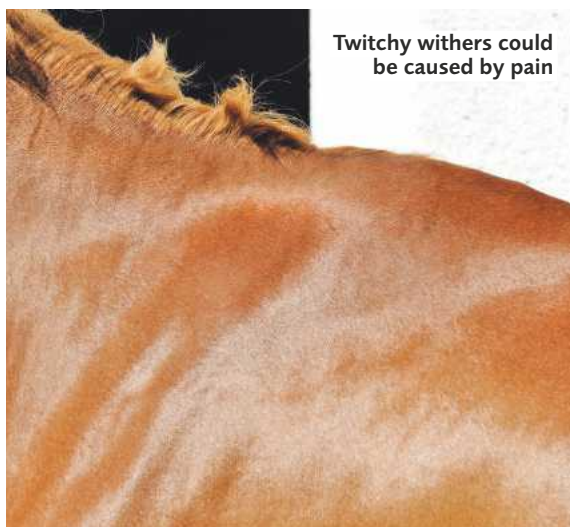
Q My gelding has developed twitchy withers. I noticed it when he came in from the field one day. Do you have any idea what this could be? He doesn't appear to be lame.

Name and address withheld

BECKY SAYS It is difficult to say what is causing your horse to have twitchy withers.

For this reason, it would be sensible to get your vet to come and check him sooner rather than later.

It may be something as simple as being bothered by flies, however he may have twitchy withers due to them being painful. This could be due to an injury or from poorly fitting tack.



Twitchy withers could be caused by pain

I recommend not riding your horse until he has been fully examined.

This is so the scent can be isolated and analysed further.

We often see stallions behaving this way, especially when they smell a mare in season.

However, any horse may perform the Flehmen response in reaction to a variety of smells – perhaps when tasting a new food or if a newcomer is introduced to their field.

They may show actions similar to this when they are in pain, have dental problems or even have something stuck in their teeth.

If your horse is regularly showing this behaviour you should ask your vet to check her over to ensure she doesn't have any physical problems.

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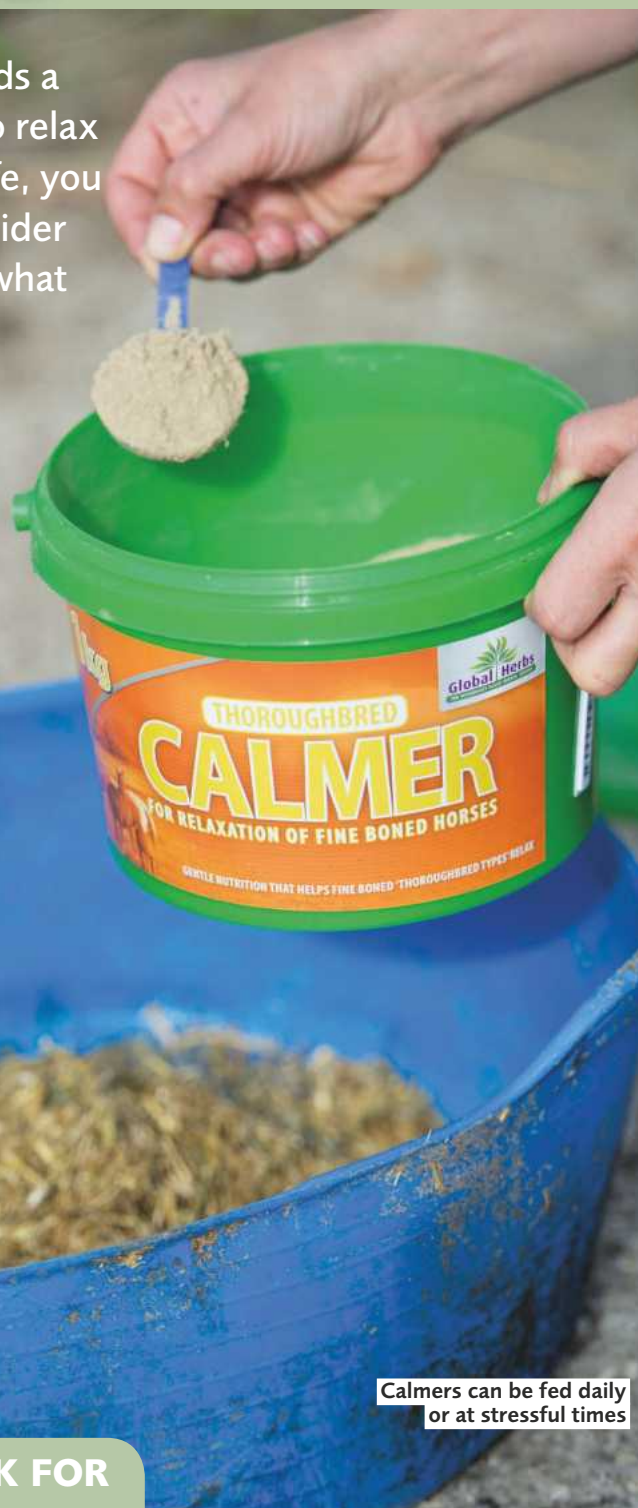
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In scuba blue (pictured), phyto green, pink clash and white, in XS-XL. Priced £44.99. Visit: www.ariat-europe.com.

Buyers' Guide

Your guide to buying a calming supplement

If your horse needs a little extra help to relax in his everyday life, you may want to consider a calmer. Here's what to look for



Calmers can be fed daily or at stressful times

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

COMPETITION LEGAL

If you compete, ensure that the product you choose contains no banned substances. The packaging should state this information clearly, or call the manufacturer if in doubt.

LENGTH OF USE

Decide whether you are looking for a calmer you can feed every day to keep the edge off, or if you want an instant product to give in stressful situations, like travelling.

COST VERSUS QUALITY

As the saying goes, you get what you pay for, although this doesn't mean expensive is best. Choose a brand you trust and check the product has beneficial ingredients.

PALATABILITY

If your horse is a fussy eater, consider choosing a flavoured supplement or see whether you can try a sample before investing in a whole tub.

With so many calming supplement products on the market, it can be difficult to know where to start.

While they're rarely a magical cure for awkward behaviour, a lot of owners claim to have seen changes in their horses after feeding a calmer, so it is certainly an option worth looking into.

"The first step is to identify whether your horse is naturally hot-headed and requires a calming product on a long-term basis, or if it is simply certain situations, such as in a show environment, that he gets stressed and uptight," says Animalife's Ross Riley.

"This can help you decide whether you want to administer a supplement on a daily basis or if you need an instant calmer for on-the-day results."

Of course, you need to make sure your horse's behaviour isn't pain related. If he suddenly starts displaying unusual behaviour it could point to an underlying problem that needs investigating, such as back or dental pain.

Horses are creatures of habit and like to be kept in a routine.

If the routine needs to change for any reason, a calmer may help your horse deal with this.

Examples of a change in routine include moving yards, more time spent in the stable in winter or a period of box rest.

Asking for advice and recommendations from horsey friends can help you discover which products may be effective.

However, don't forget that every horse is different, so while a particular calmer may work wonders on your friend's horse, it might not do the same for yours. Often it's a case of trial and error to find the right product for your horse.

If you're still unsure, shortlist your favourites and call each company's helpline to discuss your needs.

Once your horse is on a calming supplement, give the product time to work. Most will specify the time needed to see a difference, so follow the guidelines on the packaging.

If you don't see a change after the specified time, it could be worth trying a different one. Remember, it's your money, so spend it wisely.



NUPAFEED

MAH Concentrated Syringes £61.95 (10 syringes)

A form of magnesium that claims to target stress-related behaviour to allow your horse to stay settled naturally.

The syringes can be used on their own to help horses cope with stressful situations, or as a top-up for horses that are on Nupafeed's daily MAH Liquid formula.

Visit: www.nupafeed.co.uk;
tel: (01438) 861 900



EQUINE ANSWERS

Calma

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Two forms of highly absorbable magnesium – magnesium aspartate hydrochloride and magnesium AAC – are combined with calming herbs.

Free from FEI and Jockey Club banned substances, the company states that the product will act quickly.

Visit: www.equineanswers.co.uk;
tel: (01388) 420 222



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Calm Mix

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Calm Mix is FEI legal and is said to help hot, spooky horses, or those that become agitated or nervous at shows.

Visit: www.theherbalhorse.co.uk;
tel: (02783) 437 1814



CEVA SANTE ANIMALE

Confidence EQ

£35.80 (10 sachets)

This pheromone gel is said to build confidence in horses facing new or troubling situations, such as loading and travelling.

It is a copy of the equine appeasing pheromone mares produce when they nurse foals. Apply to the nostrils 30 minutes before a stressful event. It's said to last for 2.5 hours.

Visit: www.confidenceequine.com/uk;
tel: (01494) 781 510



BLUE CHIP

Karma

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Containing 100 per cent natural ingredients, Karma is a water-soluble form of magnesium that's quickly absorbed into the blood stream.

It also contains other vitamins and minerals, including vitamin C, which helps horses deal with stressful situations. Karma contains no banned or prohibited substances.

Visit: www.bluechipfeed.com;
tel: 0114 266 6200



NAF

Five Star Magic

£39.95 for 1.5kg

A magnesium calmer with a combination of herbs and nutrients that are known to relax muscle tissue and support concentration.

The supplement is designed to be fed daily to improve your horse's confidence and concentration and the company claims calming effects will be seen quickly.

Visit: www.naf-equine.eu/uk;
tel: 0800 373 106

Buyers' guide



ANIMALIFE

Vetrocalm

£14.99 for 300g

Free from banned substances, the Vetrocalm range is designed to help maintain a calm and relaxed frame of mind.

It helps replenish magnesium levels, which may have been lost through stress, fear or anxiety, and contains a blend of amino acids to support the body during periods of concern.

Visit: www.animalife.co.uk;
tel: 0845 365 0050



HEALTH & HERBAL

Tranquil E

£16.50 for 1 litre

This calmer is based on an aqueous infusion of valerian. The manufacturer states it will naturally help calm a horse or pony without removing his competitive edge.

Tranquil E can be given on a regular basis or, for stressful occasions, one to two days before and then again on the day due to be stressful.

Visit: www.animal-health.co.uk;
tel: (01787) 476 400



EQUIMINS

Serenity Ultra Calm +

£24.25 for 1kg

This supplement uses magnesium from six different sources to offer high levels of digestibility, along with calcium carbonate chelate, selected herbs and B vitamins.

Used daily, the ingredients are claimed to combat excitability without causing lethargy, resulting in a calm and serene horse.

Visit: www.equimins.com;
tel: (01548) 531 770



TOPSPEC

Calmer

£24.95 for 3kg

In a palatable caramel flavour, TopSpec Calmer contains yeast, MOS, B vitamins, magnesium, tryptophan and sepiolite clay, which all act in different ways to relax responsive horses.

The company says some ingredients will start to work within two hours, but maximum effect should be seen within three weeks.

Visit: www.topspec.com;
tel: (01845) 565 030



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£19 for 300ml

A spray containing magnesium, which is designed to be applied to the neck and ears and absorbed through the skin.

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Visit: www.freestepsuperfix.co.uk;
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A range of products to turn your horse out to perfection, including Coat Gloss and Glistening Oil. From £11.99, Supreme Products.



Men's Wild Foxx

A 100 per cent cotton shirt that's available in sage, white and royal blue colours. Timothy Foxx, £42.

Soothing Rapid relief

Nurtures and soothes the horse's skin while encouraging healthy hair growth. Safe-Care Equine, £9.99 for 750ml.



Kensington Break Free Headcollar

A headcollar that breaks free if your horse gets into trouble. Shadow Horse, £38.

Equiline Cecille X-Grip Full Seat Breeches

High-waisted breeches made from microfibre that are designed to improve rider stability through a grip seat. Fearn's Farm, £199.



Golly Galoshes

These waterproof gaiters will keep legs, boots and bandages clean. From £25.99 per pair (miniature pony size).



Junior X-Air Dazzle Plus

A vented air flow system keeps the head cool and kids will love the sparkle design. Kitemarked to PAS015. Champion, from £75.

**TRIED AND
TESTED**



Event boots

Readers put cross-country boots to the test and rate them for performance, fit and the amount of protection offered

READER
RATES

EQUILIBRIUM PRODUCTS

Tri-Zone Impact Boots, £59.95

Featuring a breathable, four-layered protection system with a pillowed lining that moulds to the legs. Visit: www.equilibriumproducts.com.



JESSICA HANNAH SAYS:

"These boots are easy to fasten and are tough, yet flexible.

"They offer great all-round protection and I particularly like the strike guards at the front and back.

"They keep my mare's legs cool during exercise, which is one of the main things I look for when choosing boots.

"I find they stay in place well and don't slip at all. Plus they are great value for money.

"I love them so much I am going to buy a pair of matching hind boots for my horse.

"The only thing I found is they come up a bit short, so you may need the next size up."



KENTUCKY

Solimbra Event Light, £84.95

Reinforced guards protect the tendons and front of the legs, while the material offers shock absorption. Visit: www.treehouseonline.co.uk.



JASMINE RAVEN SAYS:

"Although I am not keen on the colour, my first impression of these boots was that they look supportive and seem well made.

"I love the fact they offer great protection to the whole of the lower leg and they stay firmly in place out on the cross-country course.

"At first they appear to be quite rigid, but they soon mould to the horse's legs and they haven't caused any rubbing or sores.

"The boots are quite expensive, but they are good quality and made to last. I would buy a pair again, but would prefer them in a different colour."

BEST
VALUE

MARK TODD

Pro Mesh XC Boots, £39.99

With a tough, water-resistant outer, these boots offer impact and abrasion protection. Visit: www.wefi.co.uk.



LINDA WHYTE SAYS:

"The strike pad at the rear of the boots feels very strong and offers great protection to the vulnerable areas of the horse's lower legs.

"They were fiddly to fit at first, as they are a bit rigid when they are new, but once they moulded to the legs they were fine.

"My horse's legs weren't overly sweaty after use, even during the recent heatwave.

"I've put them through the washing machine twice and they have come up as good as new.

"Once fitted, the boots stay in place perfectly, even when going up and down hills. I would definitely buy a pair again."



HORSE HEALTH

Stealth Air XC Metallic Boots, £47.49

A high-tensile precision mesh offers lightweight protection, yet the material is said to be strong enough to withstand the strains of going across country. A 360-degree air ventilation system cools tendons with the use of 'opening' vents. Visit: www.horsehealth.co.uk.



SHARON HENSON SAYS: "I find these boots incredibly easy to fit to my horse's legs and they look lovely – they have a unique and eye-catching design for riders who like a bit of sparkle!

"They are well made and because they are extremely lightweight and flexible, they don't restrict the horse's movement in any way.

"After I have been cross-country schooling with my horse, his legs feel very cool and the boots stay in place well. They don't slip down at all, due to the three well-made Velcro straps that hold them firmly in place.

"I am happy that they offer good all-round protection and seem perfect for the job they are designed to do. I think they are great value for money and I would buy a pair again.

"There is nothing I dislike about them and right from the start, they felt soft and flexible, moulding to my horse's legs immediately."

BEST
OF THE
TEST

Tried and Tested



MAYJK EQUIP

X-Country Boots, from £60

Featuring a breathable, rip-stop outer shell with a strike guard, and a lining that moulds to the legs. Visit: www.shadowhorse.co.uk.



JADE PICKETT SAYS: "The thing I like most about these boots is how cool they keep my horse's legs during fast work."

"They are incredibly lightweight, yet sturdy, and are well made."

"I find them a bit fiddly to fit to the legs as the material doesn't mould easily to the shape. Also, the two Velcro straps can be tricky to line up."

"They seem to offer sufficient leg protection during exercise, although they do slip down a little on my horse's legs."

"I think the boots look smart and they offer reasonable value for money."



READER
RATES



NEW EQUINE WEAR

XC Airflow Boots, £74

Ventilated boots to keep legs cool. Made with a tough mesh outer and a foam lining. Visit: www.newequinewear.co.uk.



JESSICA DAVIES SAYS: "The first thing I noticed about the boots is how lightweight they are, and they look really smart, too."

"The tough mesh outer means they protect the horse's legs well out on the cross-country course. After exercise, my horse's legs are still cool and dry."

"With three sturdy Velcro straps they are easy to fit and stay in place well – they don't slip at all, whatever speed I am riding at."

"Although they are quite expensive, I think they are well worth the money and I would recommend them to others. I believe they will last me a long time."



READER
RATES



PREMIER EQUINE

Air Cooled Boots, £49.99

Made from lightweight microfibre leather with a strike guard. Cool air passes through the air vents. Visit: www.premierequine.co.uk.



JENNY NEWMAN SAYS: "I love the design of these boots. They look really smart and offer brilliant all-round protection."

"With three Velcro straps they are simple to fit and once in place, they don't move or slip down my horse's legs."

"I am amazed at how cool Cracker's legs stay underneath the boots, due to the fact they allow a decent amount of airflow."

"They seem incredibly well made and I think they will last me a long time."

"I would highly recommend them to any event rider, especially as they are such good value for money."



WOOF WEAR

Event Boots, £40

Repel technology prevents water absorption and padded strike areas guard against injuries caused by brushing. Made from a breathable neoprene, these boots have a Velcro tab that fits over the side fastenings to allow a more secure fit. Visit: www.woofwear.com.



KATE THOMPSON SAYS: "Smart and hardwearing, I find that once they are fitted to the horse's legs, these boots stay in place."

"There is a shell on three sides of the boots, which offers good protection to the sides and back of the legs. While there is no shell on the front, the padding is a little thicker in this area, so I am happy they offer all-round protection."

"The double Velcro straps ensure they don't come undone while you're riding and I noticed my pony's legs didn't seem as sweaty as they do with some of the other boots I have used."

"I find the material isn't as flexible as it could be, and they felt a bit rigid at first. However, they didn't rub my pony at all and he seems quite comfortable wearing them."

"These boots are great value for money and a practical choice for any event rider who wants to place their trust in a cross-country boot. I would recommend them to others and would definitely buy a pair again."





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Giveaways

WIN! We've got some great prizes up for grabs this month, including wellington boots, Royal Berkshire Show tickets and horse-care products

GRUB'S RAINLINE BOOTS



4 pairs, worth £49.95 each

Make a splash in a pair of Rainline high performance field boots from Grub's.

These new wellies combine Superdri technology in a lightweight, easy-clean rubber boot.

They feature a full-stretch neoprene panel in the shaft, giving a comfortable fit for most calf sizes.

A moisture-wicking lining keeps feet dry and comfortable, while a removable 6mm footbed provides insulation against the cold.

The boots come with a Trax outsole which features a shock absorbing component for superior grip and comfort.

Available in navy, sage green, aubergine, Fiji blue and pink, in UK sizes four to 13.

Visit: www.grubsboot.com; tel: (01279) 418 052.

BOOMERANG HICKSTEAD



1 pair of weekend tickets, worth £150

Boomerang Hickstead is a new music festival at the All England Jumping Course at Hickstead on 12 and 13 September 2015.

Headlining on the Saturday night are Simple Minds, who are supported by The Proclaimers, The Shires and Andriya Triana.

On Sunday, global superstar Jessie J will be performing, alongside The Vamps. Further support comes from Soul II Soul and Rae Morris.

The two-day music event also includes pop-up restaurants, street food stalls and alternative entertainment.

The event is named after Boomerang, Eddie Macken's famous horse who won the Hickstead Derby a record four consecutive times.

Standard ticket prices start from £39.50, while full weekend admission costs £75.

Visit: www.boomeranghickstead.com.

GROOM AWAY PRODUCTS

2 sets, worth £51.44 each

Two lucky winners will each receive a pack of care products from Groom Away, including:-

- Every Day Tangle Away, priced £6.49 for 500ml. Apply for a tangle-free, conditioned mane and tail.
- Seal to Heal, £9.99. It keeps flies out of wounds, reduces infection and assists in healing. It can also help control mud fever.
- Germ Away, £5.99. Formulated to kill harmful bacteria on hard surfaces, including strangles, E-coli, salmonella, MRSA and ringworm. Remains effective for 30 days.
- Max Strength Fly Repellent, £12.49 for 500ml. Contains citronella oil to protect against flying and biting insects.
- Anti-Parasite Spray, £8.99 for 500ml.
- Aloe Vera Gel, £7.49 for 200ml. Made from natural ingredients, the gel can help maintain healthy skin and aid recovery from minor grazes and sunburn.



Visit: www.flyaway.ltd.uk; tel: (01384) 877 857

EQUERRY HIGH FIBRE CUBES

16 bags, worth £8.95 each

Equerry High Fibre Cubes are designed for horses and ponies at rest or in very light work, when forage alone is not enough to meet their nutritional needs.

Lower energy cubes are also a perfect way to provide 'non-heating' energy for excitable horses, while keeping them in tip-top health.

They are made from a high-fibre formula providing essential vitamins and minerals, including magnesium and a source of protein.

Equerry High Fibre Cubes are low calorie, making them ideal for good-doers and are cereal-grain free with low levels of sugar and starch.

The cubes can be soaked and are suitable for elderly horses as a hay replacer.

Visit: www.equerryhorsefeeds.com;
tel: (01845) 565 640.



HOW TO ENTER...

WRITE TO WIN

This coupon must arrive by 5.30pm on 26 August. Send to: September issue Giveaways, *Horse magazine*, MyTime Media, PO Box 269, Haslingden, Rossendale BB4 0DJ. One competition entry coupon per envelope. You can also enter online at www.horsemagazine.co.uk

Initial.....

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Entering this competition indicates your consent to be added to the *Horse magazine* e-newsletter(s).
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Giveaways

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Size.....Colour

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☐ Boomerang Hickstead tickets

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ROYAL BERKSHIRE SHOW TICKETS

3 pairs of adult tickets, worth £30 each

This year's Royal County of Berkshire Show (19 to 20 September) has more equestrian action than ever before.

British Showjumping's International Stairway competition returns, but there are a number of new classes and events.

For the first time, the show will host the Shetland Pony Grand National, including an exciting qualifier for Olympia.

Another first are senior showing and dressage classes, open to veterans.

In private driving, there is a ladies only coaching class, unique for county shows.

A highlight for native fans is the introduction of lead-rein, first ridden



and ridden showing classes for Mountain and Moorlands.

Advance tickets start at £15 for adults, and £6 for children (aged five to 16).

Visit: www.berkshireshow.co.uk.

SAFE-CARE EQUINE TACK PACKS

6 packs, worth £17 each

This pack contains everything that you need for great looking tack, in three easy steps:-

● Multi-Purpose Cleaner, a non-toxic spray designed to clean all surfaces, from feed buckets to bits and stirrup irons.

● Leather & Tack Cleaner tackles dirt and grease with ease. Just apply with a damp sponge or cloth and the dirt will wipe away.

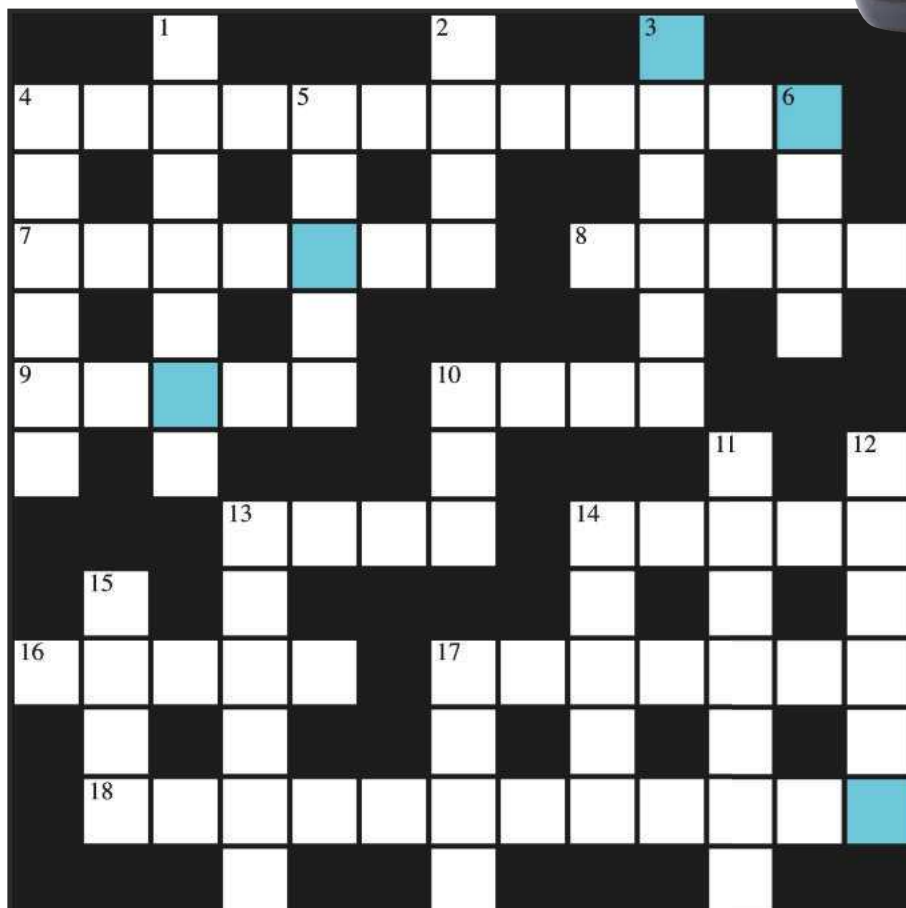
● Leather Balm is a high quality balsam, which offers the perfect finish to all your leather tack. Containing Jojoba oil, it feeds and restores a beautiful natural sheen to all leather. It also protects and waterproofs, keeping your tack – and riding boots – supple. It comes with its own sponge.

Visit: www.safecare-equine.com; tel: (01294) 832 529.



Crossword

WIN Nettex Gut Balancer and Iron, Copper & B Vits



HOW TO ENTER

Identify the word spelled out by the shaded squares, and send the form to: September issue Crossword, *Horse*, MyTimeMedia, PO Box 269, Haslingden, Rossendale BB4 0DJ, to arrive by 5.30pm on 26 August 2015.

The winner will be drawn at random. Photocopies of completed entry forms will be accepted. See page 129 for full competition rules.

PRIZE DETAILS

Nettex Gut Balancer is a prebiotic and probiotic natural yeast formulation that balances and enhances digestibility. It's said to calm irritable horses, often showing improvement within three to five days.

It helps maintain good digestive health, reducing the likelihood of weight loss, loose droppings, windsucking and discomfort when girthed up.

Feed after periods of illness or medication to help maintain digestive health.

Gut Balancer is priced £17.25 for 750g.

Iron, Copper & B Vits is a package of B vitamins, iron, copper, cobalt, zinc and manganese that are rapidly absorbed into the bloodstream.

It generates an instant energy boost for weak, lethargic or fatigued horses, such as after long periods of illness. Priced £11.15 for 500ml.

For stockist information, visit: www.nettexequine.com; tel: (01634) 257 150.

CLUES ACROSS

- 4 A European or World Cup event (12)
7 Showjumper Laura who was previously an air hostess (7)
8 _ National, famous Aintree race (5)
9 Rope used in training or exercising (5)
10 Anti-chewing equine items worn by babies at meal time? (4)
13 Basic cereal feed (4)
14 Expulsion of air which could indicate a bleed (5)
16 Regular mannerism – and riding wear (5)
17 Nationality of Flemish Brabant – part forbear of Suffolk Punch (7)
18 Previously phase B of a three-day event (12)

CLUES DOWN

- 1 Ball-firing guns – or foreleg bones (7)
2 Large joint in the back leg and a white wine (4)
3 Heavy horses from British counties? (6)
4 Round school movement (6)
5 Award for successful rider (5)
6 A little un – like a Shetland (4)
10 Initially it is the British Horse Society (3)
11 The Household Cavalry performs a ride like this (7)
12 Switch leading leg – it can be flying (6)
13 Townend – or maybe Twist (6)
14 Stomach complaint (5)
15 Keeps complaining about old horses (4)
17 Starting signal (4)

Compiled by Eric Linden

CROSSWORD NO. 136

The mystery word is

Please mark your entry 'Crossword'. One coupon per envelope.

INITIAL..... SURNAME.....

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Answers to August issue crossword

Answers Across 1. Scott 7. Throw 8. Courses 9. Bruise 10. Peter 12. Cup 13. Swiss 14. Fly 17. Jeans 18. At stud 20. Charles 21. Groom 22. Feeds
Answers Down 2. Career 3. Tree 4. Thrush 5. Horse blanket 6. Forequarters 9. Brush 11. Award 15. Action 16. Reared 19. Shoe

Prize Word: TODD

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Horse

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**16h 3ins &
Over SP**

Horse



Quality Dark Bay Gelding

Height: 15.1hh (154ccm HC) **Age:** 8 years
Price: £4,800
Location: Seen near Junction 23, M5, Somerset.
Description: Well mannered in all respects. A handsome and well schooled riding horse. Excellent paces for Dressage. Potential top class Intermediate SRT, Show Hack and PC eventing. Only for sale as owner retiring due to health problem.
01643 704063 / 07711 554658



A middle weight gentleman

Height: 17 hands **Age:** 4 year old **Price:** £6,950
Location: Cheshire
Description: Irish draft 4 years old 17hh, Chestnut gelding by Klonakilty hero, this lovely young horse has been slowly and correctly produced and is showing huge promise on the saddle in the showroom. He is an easy horse to have around, loads, travels and stands quietly on the lorry. Competed in a few shows, recently coming 2nd at the Yorkshire Sports horse show in the 4yr old hunter class. **07932868959**

**15h 3ins - 16h
2ins SP**

Talented WB mare by Cartani. Dressage / Allrounder

Height: 16 hands 2 ins **Age:** 9 year old
Price: £6,950 ovno
Location: Leics
Description: Quality 16.2 9yr old (2006) Belgium bred mare. Attractive mare, lovely temperament. Light responsive ride. 3 correct paces, good medium trot, super balanced canter. BD pts at novice in few outings, working ele' at home, potential to progress up levels (already has changes). Recently completed her first BE100. Bold xc. Started career as show jumper, BS winnings £743 (placings NC & Fox with previous rider). Sad sale. Good to box, clip, shoe. No vices/veterinary issues. Sad sale. Serious enqs only.
07866 678831 (no texts)



Quality Irish geldings

Location: Cambs
Description: 16.1 5yrs SJ/ event prospect forward going, done dressage, SJ, XC £3,850.
16.2 6yrs Mwt done XC quiet easy novice ride £3,450. Both hunted, hack alone. Good scopey jumps, good paces
07884 281 402 stingraytail@live.co.uk



Stunning Prospect 5yo Indoctro x Corland

Height: 16 hands 1 in
Age: 5 year old
Price: £12,000
Location: Galway, Ireland
Description: Black Beauty is a Irish breed 16.1hh 5 yr old gelding by the prestigious Indoctro out of a Corland mare, easy to do in every way, snaffle mount, athletic jump, and scopey stride with enough blood to make a top eventer. Has been successful competing in showjumping 1.15m classes, Competed in cross country trails successfully. He is a competitive horse with a brave and honest attitude. No Vices, Clean Legs, 5 star vetting.
00353862418589



Point-to-Point Schoolmaster

Height: 16 hands 2 ins **Age:** 11 year old **Price:** £POA
Location: South Norfolk
Description: 16.2hh, 11 y.o. bay gelding. He is the winner of a point-to-point, over hurdles, and placed numerous times. A good sound horse who jumps and stays well.
07879412414



DHI UFO

Height: 16 hands **Age:** 14 year old **Price:** £15,000
Location: East Sussex
Description: Stunning 16hh, bay, 14 year old, KWPN, gelding by Olivi (Jazz). Expressive paces and a great personality. Good to shoe, clip travel etc. Suitable for lady or gentleman, ideal junior or young rider's horse. Same home for the past 6 years, where he has been trained and competed by Markus Bauer, from Elementary to PSG. Now seeking a 5* long term home.
01323 846454
dressage@markusbauer.com



Serious Competition/ Event Prospect

Height: 15.1hh **Age:** 7yo **Price:** £7,950
Description: ISH bay gelding. Cruising & Ramiro Z breeding. Seriously talented young horse, competed six unaffiliated ODE's 2014 culminating in winning Solihull 90 cm with Dressage score of 22. Only lightly competed this yr in BD Team Quest due to owner relocating to West Wales. Exc flatwork, ready to compete now & move up to 100cm. Intelligent, trainable & would also excel as pure show jumper.
01646 6236389 barbara.caulfield@btopenworld.com



FUTURE TOP CLASS WHP / SMALL EVENT HORSE

Height: 153cm **Age:** 7yo **Price:** £POA
Description: Quality Irish bred Connemara with a bright future. Exceptional conformation, bone & straight movement honest & scopey, jumps 1.15m easily at home, wins unaffiliated WHP, XC & DR. Eligible for Novice Workers with the potential to quickly progress to HOYS qualifiers and beyond. He could also be a fabulous small horse for BE or BD. Patiently produced & given time to mature, same home last 3 1/2 years. **07968 030 674 janehollands@hotmail.com**

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PARKHILL LEGACY

Height: 16 hands 1 in **Age:** 10 year old
Price: £30,000
Description: Quality Showjumper. 16.1hh 10 yo Gelding LUDWIG x TANGELO XX. Produced by Amateur. He is Careful & Scopey. Qualified Winter Novice Final 2015. Newcomer & Foxhunter Double Clears for 2015. Competed Successfully Internationally this Season with Great Results up to 1.40m and potential to go further. Open to Vetting.
07738 994033
james@jamesmithfencing.co.uk



Future Star

Age: 2 year old
Price: £3,500
Location: Westmeath
Description: Kilnacappagh Champ, 2 year old Grey Registered Connemara Gelding. 148cm. Dam Granogue Blondie. Sire Thorgal De L'Aubier. Well-handled and has an exceptional temperament. He has no vices, lumps or bumps. Both his dam and sire were both champions in the show ring. This pony has huge potential as a working hunter or show pony and is a real must see.
00353872146499

16.1hh Bay Mare

Height: 16.1hh
Age: 8yo
Price: £2,500
Description: Looking for a kind purchaser for my mare. She is a very sweet nature & gives 100% in everything. Has superb paces and loves jumping. Price negotiable if guaranteed a loving home.
07551 045 761 avadrake97@hotmail.co.uk



16hh flashy chestnut gelding

Height: 16 hands **Age:** 5 year old
Price: £3,000
Description: Reg Irish Sport. 5 yrs. Superb mover and scopey jump. Talented horse who is really sweet to ride and handle. Lightly hunted and competed. Hacks out alone or in company. Make lovely eventer /allrounder/hunter. No vices. **07778414739 (No texts please)**




A child's pony in every way

Height: 12 hands 1 in **Age:** 5 year old **Price:** £1,250
Location: Mons
Description: 12.1 very sweet bay mare. 5yrso. All PC rallies, SJ, Dressage & Hunted. 100% to catch, box (trailer/lorry), shoe, stable and traffic. Safe and steady in large open fields. Hacks quietly alone/company, always in a snaffle. Easily caught groomed and tacked up by her little rider. Really does not have a nasty bone in her body. Definitely no attitude, laminitis or sweet itch. Very suitable for a novice family looking for their first pony. We can help with transport.
01873 890298

14h 3ins- 15h 2ins

* Stunning Welsh Cob *

Height: 15.1hh
Age: 9yo
Price: £3,650
Description: 9yo gelding, 9 yr old, potential performance cob, low mileage, snaffle mouthed, schools, needs more education to fulfil his potential. Delivery possible at cost.
01239698311 edwardsclaire79@aol.com




Competition Pony

Height: 13hh **Age:** 15yo **Price:** £3,000
Description: Very smart, all-rounder. Very responsive with an athletic jump. Excellent brakes and attitude. Ready to go out and win. No vices or blemishes. Videos available.
07545 098 139
gailtotty@live.co.uk

Eye Catching Allrounder

Height: 15.1hh
Age: 11yo
Price: £5,000
Description: XC machine, competing at BE100, SJ 1.10m, WH, 3 correct paces. Hunted, snaffle mouth. 100% bombproof in every way. No vices. Sad sale.
07703 857 264 stephiejackson@live.com



Very green 15hh chestnut

Age: born 2010
Price: £1,350
Description: Dainty 15hh chestnut filly. Broken lightly last year to ride & drive but turned back out as no time to carry on with her.
07835 743 571 esthernicklin@btinternet.com




Fantastic Competition / Pony Club Pony

Height: 14.2hh **Age:** 8yo **Price:** £5,000
Description: Freddie, blue & white Irish Sports Pony. Safe, fun all rounder. Experienced in all PC activities. Loves his SJ & XC. He is very genuine & has given a very nervous jockey a lot of confidence. Snaffle mouthed. Freddie has impeccable ground manners, good to box, shoe, clip. Well behaved at competitions. Fit & ready to go out & have fun. 5* home priority for this lovely little pony.
07969 661 409 g_c_hodson@hotmail.com

14h 2ins & Under

QUALITY BYRDS / PC / SP

Height: 13.2hh
Age: 7
Price: £2,000
Description: Fab little mare, Easy to do in all ways and always wants to please. Lovely hack good in traffic. Good flatwork and jump. Sadly must sell, sensible offers considered.
07968 918 859 carmen@politeponies.com




Super Welsh D Mare

Height: 14.2hh **Age:** 9yo **Price:** £2,500 ONO
Description: Real quality mare. Approximately 14.2hh, fully registered Welsh Section D mare by Leyeswick Hagro. Previous broodmare now broken & riding the last few months. Been to local shows XC & show jumping. Super all round pony / mother and daughter share / M&M show pony. Hacks out alone & in company, good in traffic. Quiet to do in all ways; catch, handle, trim, load etc. **01792 873 423 lowridavies93@yahoo.co.uk**

silver snaffle pendant to Horse magazine

see p22 for details



Connemara stallion

Height: 14 hands 1 in

Location: Glos

Description: Grey. Beautiful Class one 14.1 hh lovely action, top pedigree M&M champion In Hand. Broken. HWSD tested, Clear. Young stock may be seen, sale or loan to knowledgeable home.
01594832590

4 Horses & 4 Ponies For Sale

Price: 4k for

hunters,

ponies 2k-7k

Description: Too many nags! 4 kids growing out of ponies-super talented. 2nd and 3rd ponies 12.2 - 14.2 and 2 cracking hunters 16.3 and 16 hnds.

07798 625 545

daniel-hunt@btconnect.com



Skewbald TB x Hanoverian x Cob Colt Foal to make 16hh plus

Height: 16 hands **Price:** £1,000 ono

Description: Excellent Sports Horse and Showing potential. Both parents can be seen. Deposit secures at weaning can deliver. **07746 359827**



Kannan

Price: from £2,000-£5,000

Description: Top class youngstock by Kannan, Corland, Karento and Estaban. Grafenstolz. Golden Lariatt. Master Imp. Carrick Diamond Led. All BS quality. Ricardo Z. For sale due to retirement.

Home: 01923 263661

/ Yard: 01923 266405

Smart / Talented 14hh Pony

Age: 11yo

Price: £8,000

Description:

Fantastic Floaty

Paces, very

trainable attitude

with manners to die

for. BD 6 pts, BE 11 fd pts BS 73pts. Byrds Potential or Eventing.

07500 772 388 suz05@live.co.uk



HOYS Quality Small Show Hunter - Total Gentleman!!

Height: 15 hands 1 in **Age:** 4 year old

Price: £5,750 **Location:** Denbigh

Description: 15.1hh, dapple grey, 4 yr old. Sensible, charming, straight forward. Extravagant paces, with a huge presence. Competed at Shows, dressage, xc, fun rides. Facebook Page, Heather Griffiths. **07970 91405**



Horses For Sale

Wanted Horses and ponies

There are still good homes available, project not objected to, must be sensibly priced.

07878673624

Youngstock

Horse



Dapple Grey Reg Connemara

Height: 15 hands 2 ins

Age: 2 year old **Price:** £1,000

Description: A stunning dapple grey Zyro Connemara gelding fully reg to mature approx. 15.2hh. Lovely type combining quality with good bone and temperament. Potential competition / hunter / eventer or allround family horse.

07808 475175 / 01994 484294

Bay Cob Filly Foal to make 14.2hh plus

Height: 14 hands 2 ins **Price:** £500 ono

Description: Lovely action with great M & M showing/family horse potential. Deposit secures at weaning can deliver.

07746 359827



Skewbald Filly Foal

Height: 16 hands 2 ins

Price: £1,250 ono

Description: Red & White TB X Filly Foal out of a NH TB mare to make 16.2hh. Beautiful markings with great showing and sports horse potential. Both parents can be seen. Deposit secures at weaning can deliver.

07746 359827



Is there room in your home and your heart?

Offering a home to a rescued horse really makes a difference; not just to their lives but the lives of other horses in need.

The Mare and Foal Sanctuary has many horses & ponies looking for homes, including youngsters, ridden and companions. Each horse has completed an extensive behavioural assessment, helping us to find the right horse for you.

Each empty stable offers sanctuary to another rescued horse.



Registered Charity No. 1141831

Honeysuckle Farm
Hacombe with Combe
Newton Abbot TQ12 4SA
01626 355969
office@mareandfoal.org
www.mareandfoal.org



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Horse To advertise in *Horse* Classified or Horses for sale

Horse Of The Week

Horse



16.3 flashy talented chestnut gelding

Height: 16 hands 3 ins **Age:** 4 year old **Price:** £3,000

Description: Reg Irish Sport by Night Cruise/Cruising dam by Aldato. 4 yrs. Very well bred gentleman who is riding very well for age. Top class scopey jump. Laid back and easy temperament. Really lovely floaty mover and an amazing scopey jump. Will go far. Competed XC and Sj well and will event or showjump successfully. No vices. **07778414739 (no text please)**



Horse of a Lifetime, Top Quality Gelding

Height: 18.2hh **Age:** 11yo **Price:** £10,800
Description: Absolutely Fabulous ID, chestnut gelding, lovely stamp of horse, qualified heavy weight hunter RIHS 2015. Hunted 4 seasons with 5' 2" lady, always snaffle mouth. Arm chair ride, good well balanced jump. A striking big horse with rhythmic paces. Travels well trailer/ horse box. Good to do in all ways excellent in traffic. An absolutely stunning horse. **07703 595 087 margot@newpoolfarm.co.uk**



Wonderful Sports Horse All-rounder

Height: 16.3hh **Age:** 16yo **Price:** £2,995
Description: Registered Sports Horse, dark bay mare. A totally genuine mare with a fantastic personality. Hacks alone or in company, no vices, great to shoe, box, loves hunting, SJ/XC/dressage, schooled well. Not at all mareish, very gentle & kind. Proven show hunter. Total dream horse for a five star home only please. To include all tack & rugs. **07926 032 401 joelgar@gmail.com**

16h 3ins & Over

Superb 16.3 KWPN x TB

Height: 16 hands 3 ins

Age: 4 year old

Price: POA

Location:

Gloucestershire, Coleford

Description: 4yr old Mare Elegant but substantial good bone Fabulous Personality. Backed at 3 turned away and now ready to start work. Showed great promise in all spheres correct extravagant paces. **07748985975 / 07555138941**



Shire x Dutch Warmblood

Height:

16 hands 2 ins

Age: 4 year old

Price: £1,800

Location:

West Sussex

Description: Grey mare, 16.2hh 4yo. Choice of 6 more geldings and mare all shire x dutch warmbloods. Homebred. **07939163712**



Novice/1* Eventer

Height: 16.3hh

Age: 10yo

Price: £8,000

Description: Ch KWPN gelding. Amarillo IV has 21 BE points, would suit capable amateur to compete at this level. SJ & hunts well. Urgent sale needed hence price **07798 676 407 matt@selbyside.co.uk www.matt.selbyside.co.uk**



18 hands 6 y.o. Gelding

Height: 18 hands **Age:** 6 year old **Price:** £2,500

Location: Bridgend

Description: A lovely big horse who has recently been brought back into work and will make a very nice hunter. The horse has recently started to jump and is showing great potential. He has been out on several fun rides and has been foot perfect. He hasn't done a lot of work in the school but has done lots of hacking out. **07969066524**

Dutch Warmblood Hollands Golden Boy

Height: 17 hands

Age: 15 year old

Price: £2,500

Location: West Sussex

Description: 17hh 15yo gelding, bombproof, very good in traffic, no vices. Would suit a novice. **07939163712**



Bandit

Height: 18 hands

Age: 9 year old

Price: £1,500

Location:

West Sussex

Description: 9yo Dutch Warmblood gelding, 18hh. Good in traffic, no vices. **07939163712**



STUNNING BAY GELDING

Height: 16.3hh **Age:** 6yo **Price:** EPOA

Description: Great scopey jump, very good paces, huge presence, stunning looks with lots of potential to go far in any sphere. Grandsire Cavalier Royale. Competed at BE100 level. No vices, easy to shoe, box, clip, hack alone, in traffic, same home since 3yo, came over from Ireland as a foal, sad sale, fit & ready to go, private home near Newcastle, videos on request. Good home a priority for this top class horse. **01669630215/07920836896 info@bushbucksafaris.com**

15h 3ins - 16h 2ins

Talented Competition

Height: 16.1hh **Age:** 5yo **Price:** £4,750

Description:

Slowly produced, working well on flat with stunning uphill paces & a trainable, bold attitude as he continues to learn how to jump.

07770 577 756 kirstenwarden@hotmail.co.uk



magazine
sections call

01689 869893



Potential large riding horse

Height: 16 hands 1 in **Age:** 4 year old **Price:** £3,500
Location: Sevenoaks, Kent
Description: Stunning 4year old 16.1hh chestnut gelding by Broadstone Dickens x TB mare. Shown twice in hand as 3year old placed both times. He is an exceptional mover and has the most lovely temperament and presence. Unbroken, but lunging with tack on. Very good to trim bath and with farrier also to load and travel. He will have a great future ahead of him. Homebred. **01732833847**

It's The Business x Armstrong (Ramiroz)

Price: £1,375 or near offer
Description: 2008 mare, previous BSJA winning of approx. £680. Nice temperament, good to handle etc. Passport and vaccinated. Broodmare due to unpredictable under saddle. Good home wanted.
07782385131



Showjump / Event / Hunt

Height: 16.2hh **Age:** 4yo **Price:** £5,000
Description: Smart 16.2hh Coloured performance bred mare (Irish x Elite AES) with a fabulous temperament, very correct and scopey jump, super balanced paces, 100% to hack alone & in company. Lovely to do in all ways.
07733 007 096 katygreen16@aol.com



JJ's Clio & Pollyanna

Height: Both 16 hands 2 ins
Age: Both 5 year olds **Price:** £8,000 each
Description: Clio: Grey mare, 16"2, 5 years, lightly jumped as 4 y.o. Double clears at British Novice Discovery. Over 80 points. By Clinton II out of Artos Z mare. Pollyanna: Chestnut mare, 16"2, 5 years, as above over 100 points. By Polling Pilot out of Wolfgang Mare. Both horses ride nicely, good lookers, shoe, clip, box.
07830144936

**14h 3ins -
15h 2ins**

Super All-Rounder

Height: 15 hands 2 ins
Age: 10 year old
Price: £3,750 o.v.n.o.
Location: Yorkshire
Description: 15"2hh, 10 y.o middleweight chestnut gelding. Hunts, dressage, S.J, etc. Hacks anywhere alone/company. Comfortable, balanced, uphill ride. Snaffle-mouth, no vices, a lovely person who deserves a top class home.
07796443777



Clifton Dickara

Height: 16 hands 2 ins **Age:** 10 year old
Description: 16.2hh chestnut NZ TB gelding born 8/9/04. Produced slowly & correctly by Jock Paget. Won last Novice on 26.9. Successfully competed at 2*. Never had CC fault. Snaffle mouth all phases. Very easy to ride- safe, brave, careful, fast. Re-advertised due to time waster. Phone Jock Paget.
07437 918644
www.cliftoneventers.com



Quality Dark Bay Gelding

Height: 15.1hh (154ccm HC) **Age:** 8 years
Price: £7,000
Location: Seen near Junction 23, M5. Somerset.
Description: Well mannered in all respects. A handsome and well schooled riding horse. Excellent paces for Dressage. Potential top class Intermediate SRT, Show Hack and PC eventing. Only for sale as owner retiring due to health problem.
01643 704063 / 07711 554658



Ballynamona Lady

Height: 16 hands 2 ins
Price: £4,250
Description: 2010 16.2hh. Class 1 mare by STAR KINGDOM ex CLONMELL LASS (RID). Inspected September 2014, achieving high scores. Excellent conformation, full of presence and sure to make top show prospect. Good substance, kind disposition and straight movement.
07971 720432
vickyjmathews@btconnect.com



16.1 stunning quality event

Height: 16 hands 1 in **Age:** 4 year old
Price: £2,000
Description: Bay gelding reg Irish Sport Horse by Watermill Swatch. Breeding includes Clover Hill. 4 yrs. The most amazing mover and jumper. Oozes talent. Will definitely go top if produced well as a eventer or SJ or just dressage. Friendly temperament. **07778414739 (no text please)**



PARKHILL LEGACY

Height: 16 hands 1 in **Age:** 10 year old
Price: £30,000
Description: Quality Showjumper. 16.1hh 10 yo Gelding LUDWIG x TANGELO XX. Produced by Amateur. He is Careful & Scopey. Qualified Winter Novice Final 2015. Newcomer & Foxhunter Double Clears for 2015. Competed Successfully Internationally this Season with Great Results up to 1.40m and potential to go further. Open to Vetting.
07738 994033
james@jamesmithfencing.co.uk

Stunning 15.2hh

Height: 15 hands 2 ins
Age: 4 year old
Price: £2,750
Description: Irish cob gelding. Done show jumping and cross country training. Good to hack. Quiet little horse.
019263661 or 01923266405



Super Cob

Height: 15 hands 1 in
Price: £5,000 **Location:** Suffolk
Description: 15.1 ten year old Connemara x. All round hunter / eventer hunted Tipperary Foxhounds & Island then last season in Suffolk x 2 a week (references available) Won & placed O.D.E. X.C. 3ft6. Fun comfortable easy mannered lady longing to please. Good box, catch, clip, farrier, etc.
01728684025 or 07880707566
www.lydiaharvey.co.uk



Horse Receive a **FREE*** when you subscribe

16h 3ins & Over

Stunning Grey Gelding

Height: 17hh **Age:** 5
Price: £5,500 ONO

Description: 100% box, shoe, clip. Hacks alone or in co., Jumping BN & DISC. Schooled XC. Moves well, 3 established paces & has started lateral work & flying changes. Lives in or out. He is fit & ready to go. Regrettable sale as he has just grown too big for me.

07470 140 430 b.chaplin@outlook.com



Potential SJ/ Event Horse by Irco Miro Gii International Showjumper

Height: 16.1hh **Age:** 3yo **Price:** £6,250 ONO

Description: Irco Miro Gii, Grand sire Irco Mena, grandfather Irco Marco & great great grandfather Irco Polo - jumped WEG, European Championships & Nations Cup. His dam was also a Grade A show jumper. Wonderful, loose, athletic paces & an exceptional trainable attitude with a view to bring him on & sell him at 4 but circumstances have changed & is offered for sale to a 5* home only. Been ridden 7 times - the photo was the 7th time! He is a horse of a lifetime & he will be truly exceptional given the time & patient training he has had. Easy to do in every way, is handled by my non horsey husband & has no vices. 07970 544 134 mrs08@aol.com

Super genuine confidence

Height: 16.3hh **Age:** 16
Price: £3,000

Description: Pepsi is an experienced WH, RC & BE horse. She will jump anything & give a huge amount of confidence. Not for a complete novice but for someone looking to move onto horses or to event. Brilliant on farm rides. She has 3 lovely paces. Snaffle mouthed. A difficult & sad sale due to owners ill health. 07584 048 932 jennifer@silostop.com



Fantastic Project

Height: 16.3hh
Age: 5

Price: £2,950 ono

Description: IDx gelding, well up to weight. 3 balanced paces, good conformation & attitude. Ready to continue education.

01243 530 460 riding@lhstables.co.uk



16.1 Stunning Quality Coloured

Height: 16 hands 1 in **Age:** 4 year old

Price: £3,000. Part-Ex Possible.

Description: Reg Irish sport 4 yrs. Top quality potential Event / SJ / Hunt. Manners to burn to ride and handle. Snaffle mouth. Competed SJ/ XC and hunted in Ireland. Hacks alone or in company. Lovely kind horse with lots of potential. No vices.

07778414739 (no texts please)

15h 3ins - 16h 2ins

14.2hh Event Pony

Height: 14 hands 2 ins
Age: 7 year old

Price: £8,000 ono **Location:** N Yorkshire

Description: Seriously talented 7yo reg Connemara mare. Such consistent results with serious scope to progress. Placed BE90s, PC open ODEs, XC schooled BE100 & Novice. Won countless SJ up to 1.10m & dressage. 25 SJAI points, has done PC rallies and on NSEA teams. Has scope to FEI / Badminton Grassroots. Adorable at home, snaffle mouthed. To 5* home only. 07951740998



Showjumper by Limmerick

Height: 16.2hh **Age:** 8yo **Price:** £18,000

Description: Qualified 2015 BN championship - 4 out of 4 double clears at BN. Jumped BN 2nd round at Houghton Hall as his 3rd outing this year. Now jumping NC with ease & will be moving up to Foxhunter this season. A serious competition horse with bags of potential, also an exc hunt horse, who has whipped in for the past 2 seasons. One of the easiest horses I have had to manage. For sale due to lack of time. 07414 522 871 jamespratt007@yahoo.co.uk

Want to be successful? Look no further!

Height: 16.2hh **Age:** 6 **Price:** £6,000

Description: Deana is a beautiful marked well put together mare, she has bred 2 stunning foals. Working well on the flat with 3 established paces, now starting work medium & changes, a super careful jumper who is a easy even ride to a fence, currently schooling over 1.20 an exceptional ride XC a real heart of a lion with scope to burn, goes over anything banks ditches water. This mare's trainable attitude will get her a long way a darling to have around all she's wants to do is please. No time wasters please.

01726 823 975 / 07710 189 248 chellycouch@aol.com



Grade 1 Irish Draught

Height: 16 hands **Age:** 10 year old **Price:** £4,500

Location: Bucks

Description: Stunning 16 h Liver chestnut 10 yr old mare out of Castana and Ginger Dick. She has had 5 lovely foals and then was easy to break at the beginning of this year. Has now done Xcountry, SJ and lessons in a riding school. Hacks out alone or in company, 100% to load shoe etc. Unique opportunity.

07795 974211



British Bred

Height: 16.2hh **Age:** 8yo **Price:** £8,000
Location: West Sussex

Description: Bay mare by Creme Vant Speent JE which includes bloodlines of KASH MRI and NABAB DE REVE. Currently jumping double clears newcomers, has plenty of scope to go on. Three balanced, uphill, correct paces. Very established flatwork, including flying changes etc. She is also x-country schooled, around BE 90. Proving brave and bold, would be good enough to excel in all three spheres, good to hack, box, shoe etc. No vices or hang-ups. Sad sale of this much loved mare. 07770 759811



16.1hh bay gelding

Height: 16 hands 1 in
Age: 5 year old

Price: £2,400

Description: 5 years by Tillerman. Same farm home since birth. Dam can be seen. Ran three times at 4/5 years. Great potential for ROR. A quality TB with great attitude and presence.

01482 656045



silver snaffle pendant

to *Horse magazine* see p22 for details



Beautiful PRE Gelding

Height: 16.1hh **Age:** 6 **Price:** £5,500
Description: Bartolemo is a beautiful Andalusian who was bred here in the UK. From Perchelera. I brought her into the UK in foal to Quejio IV, Yeguada Aimeran's Gold Medal Calificado stallion. (17.2HH) Barty has taken a long time to mature & consequently is only just backed, although we have been doing groundwork for a good while as we wait for him to grow up! He moves well & very straight and is a blank sheet ready to start education.
01497 820520
sallyherdman1@gmail.com



Stunning colt by Future Gravitass

Price: £2,600
Description: To make 16.2/3hh. Correct conformation, good temperament & nice straight paces. By the event stallion Future Gravitass, dam successfully competed eventing, DR & team chasing (dam also for sale, 12yo by Czar, ready to bring back into work at weaning) With his parentage & type he should surely go on to have a successful event career or equally is good enough to show. Foal £2600, dam £1250, together £3500. **07779 100103 sue.giles@btinternet.com**

Top Class YR/ Amateur SJ

Height: 16.1hh **Age:** 7
Price: £9,500
Description: Mare by Silvano, 99 SJI points in few outings, competing 120 double clear and fast against clock, very easy and genuine. Located in Ireland but viewings and delivery can be easily arranged. Videos available.
07792 922 490 kclack@slb.com



Very smart grey Irish gelding

Height: 16.1hh **Age:** 6yo
Price: £5,000
Location: Herefordshire Borders
Description: Competed successfully SJ, dressage and ODE. Won first Working Hunter. Hacks alone or in company. Good to box, clip, shoe. Willing attitude and easy to do. A horse with potential. Good trial facilities.
Tel: 01547 550570 or 07967 327535



TB x Cob

Height: 15.3hh **Age:** 6yo
Price: £4,000 ono
Description: Coloured mare has competed DR SJ hunted, attended PC Camp and XC schooled. Full vaccs. Good to box, shoe and clip. Bold mare not a novice ride but completely unspoilt with snaffle mouth.
01457 870904 or 07977 310811



JUST BROUGHT OVER FROM IRELAND

Price: £10,000
Height: 16 hands 2 ins
Age: 9 years old
Description: Dapple grey 9yrs RID Gelding. Qualified for RID champs, being sold with the ride. A fine, upstanding horse, with superb confirmation and paces. Goes well in snaffle or double bridle. **07878 673624**



Irish X gelding

Height: 15.3hh **Age:** 9
Price: £6,500
Description: Done many PC activities including rallies, team SJ & eventing. No novices please; needs a competent, firm but fair rider as can be spooky. Would suit competitive home. 5* home required. Good to catch, box, shoe etc. Very sad sale of much loved.
01825 760 731 jenn.baker427@gmail.com



Stunning Buckskin

Height: 16 hands 1 in
Age: 4 year old
Price: £4,750
Description: Stunning 4yo 16'1 filly by Multicolor II x Danish WB. Home bred and backed late last year. She has proven straight forward with a lovely, willing character. Showing huge potential in shows she's competed in this summer. Now ready to go and have some real fun in a forever home. Sally. **07788670108 hrpsal@aol.com**



EXCITING FUTURE PROSPECT

Winner of BE100. Stunning, 6 year old chestnut gelding, 4 white socks and blaze. Very well bred by Garrick Diamond Lad. Stands about 16.1 hh. Lovely sweet natured character. Started his eventing career this season and has had two double clears at BE90 for 6th and 10th, Double Clears BE100 placed and won last time out. Quite simply amazing cross country, super confident and super quick. Not far of being ready for novice. Definitely an incredibly exciting prospect for the future.
Shropshire 07850 943158 / 07989 797386

14h 3ins -
15h 2ins

15 hands, 3 year old Cob

Price: £1,500
Location: Louth, Lincs

Description: 15 hands, 3 year old show cob. Broken to ride and drive. First class show mare with amazing action and temperament. Good to catch, good in heavy traffic and good to box and show.
07989 655668



15hh Grey 6yr Old Irish Mare

Height: 15 hands **Age:** 6 year old **Price:** £2,750
Description: A kind & gentle mare that is coming on nicely. She is schooling well on the flat & is good in traffic. She will happily jump round a course of SJ & XC. She has been hunted. She is ridden in a happy mouth snaffle. Ideal mother / daughter share. Would be great for PC / RC & she would make a fantastic WH pony. She is a cracking mare with a great future in front her. She loves attention & is good to bath & trim. Loads in lorry & trailer. Good to shoe. **07970269123**



Genuine Schoolmaster

Height: 15 hands **Age:** 8 year old **Price:** £3,500
Location: Bucks
Description: Benji is an adorable 8 yr old 15h Irish cob who has been a superstar in my riding school for 5 yrs and would now like a loving individual owner. He is 150% to handle in all respects and has done everything to high standard. 5 star home only please.
07795 974211



Horse

To advertise in *Horse* Classified or Horses for sale

Stunning Lusitano Stallion

Height: 15 hands 2 ins
Age: 7 year old **Price:** POA

Description: Divertido. Dapple Grey 15.2hh 7 year old. 3 good paces and conformation. Lots of potential for dressage and competition. Well balanced with lots of presence, needs a confident rider. Lovely nature and easy to handle. Super dressage prospect. **01837810350**



Horse



A super safe pony

Height: 12 hands **Age:** 10 year old **Price:** £1,250

Description: 12hh pretty chestnut gelding with flaxen mane and tail, 10yro. Absolutely 100% to catch, box, farrier, stable and traffic, all done by his littler rider. He is super safe out hunting on/off lead rein. Hacks out on busy roads, trotting alongside or led from another pony. Steady mannered and stoppable in large open fields. He is a little star at local shows, BTO, Fancy Dressed and Mini S.J. Goes to all PC rallies including summer camp, all in a snaffle. Ridden off the LR by a 5yro around the arena and yard. Never, ever sharp, fizzy or spooky and always makes his little rider feel in control. **01873 890298 (Mons)**

14h 2ins & Under

Super PC / Hunting Pony

Height: 14.1hh **Age:** 9yo

Price: £4,500 OVNO

Description: Reg Connemara gelding. PC Area dressage team, BE and working hunter placings, really super hunter. Sensible, safe, sound.

01874 730 300 kr.pr@btinternet.com



STUD REDUCTION OF MINIATURE SHETLAND PONIES.

Awesome show champion stock. Mares, foals, yearlings, mainly all black and white. All with passports SPSBS. Super temperaments. Excellent show ponies, pets or companions.

Contact Sophia: 07887 545 469



All round hunting pony

Height: 13 hands 2 ins **Age:** 12 year old
Price: £3,450

Description: 13.2 Connemara X 12 year old mare, same family 8 years. Hunted in Ireland with Tipperary F.H. now in Suffolk 2 seasons. All Pony Club things. Nanny hunter & has introduced several children & small adults to the joy of hunting, good flatwork bold X.C. & S.J. good all traffic, box, catch, clip. Sweet temp. **01728684025 / 07880707566**
www.lydiaharvey.co.uk

Stunning 13hh Competition

Age: 9yo **Price:** £4,500

Description: Bella has done all pony club activities including senior camp. She was 4th in her first ODE. Hunted, 100% in traffic and open spaces. **07854 832 604**
mollylovesponies@hotmail.co.uk



Reg Connemara Irish bred mare

Height: 14 hands

Age: 4 year old

Price: £1,000 the pair.

Location: Somerset

Description: 14 hands

(still growing), 4 years.

Lightly handled, with filly foal at foot by a Friesian stallion. Passported. Both lovely temperaments. More pics available. **07974 151272**



Pair of Fells

Price: £4000 ONO

Description: Two quality fell type, 13.2, 14hh rising 4, half brother & sister. Professionally backed and ridden away, perfect combination as ride & drive, owned since 6 months old Passport, chipped, injections, teeth. Private sale.

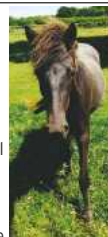
01628 475 331 eve: 07919 167 166
jo.millwardcroft@btinternet.com

Eriskay filly for sale

Height: 13 hands **Age:** 3 year old

Price: £450 **Location:** Wiltshire

Description: Rising 3, already 13 hands, should make 13.2. Very well handled, used to being tacked up, long reins, very calm, sweet temperament, easy to catch/handle, sort hard to find, transport can be arranged, other youngsters available. **07979898106**



Pony for sale

Height: 12 hands 2 ins

Age: 15 year old

Price: £200 ono

Location: Wiltshire

Description: 12.2 grey mare, very rare breed, 15 years old, has been ridden, needs restricted grazing to avoid laminitis £200 or near offer, can arrange transport. **07979898106**



Scopey 13.2hh

Height: 13.2hh **Age:** 7yo **Price:** £4,750

Description: Done all PC activities inc. camp, Area Dress. & S/J. forward going, moves well, brought on slowly, ready to excel. Jumps 80/90/1m with scope to go further. BS reg. Fantastic hunting Goes first/last/stands. Fun safe hack. 100% all ways sadly outgrown. 5* home only, tack available. Lots more photos, PC & Hunting references available.

01953 498 223 / 07917 570 813 aspave@aol.com

Highland Mare

Height: 13.3hh **Age:** 9yo

Price: £3,500

Description: Placed at dressage. Easy catch, load, shoe, clip. Lives out, alone or with others. Very kind pony, lives out alone or with others.

01424 830 611 pitfieldstud@yahoo.co.uk



Horse

magazine
sections call

01689 869893



**Horse Of
The Week**

Horse



STUNNING BAY GELDING

Height: 16.3hh **Age:** 6yo **Price:** £POA
Description: Great scopey jump and very good paces, with lots of potential to go far in any sphere. Sire Tom Cavalier, Grandsire Cavalier Royale. Competed at BE100 level. Easy to shoe, box, clip, hack alone and in traffic, no vices, lovely temperament, great character, same home since a 3year old, came over from Ireland as a foal, sad sale. Fit and ready to go, sad sale from private farming home just north of Newcastle.

07920 836 896 info@bushbucksafaris.com



RC/PC/Grassroot eventer

Height: 16.3hh **Age:** 15
Location: Worcestershire
Price: £4,500 ONO, All offers considered
Description: Evented at BE90/100 No jumping faults at BE90 Safe to hack and handle Very genuine horse Easy to do in all ways Very sad sale 5* home required / hence price.
07730 482 540
joeyandloki123@hotmail.com

Potential - SJ, Event

Height: 17hh **Age:** 6yo
Price: £5,750
Description: 17hh gelding, 6yrs. Well bred, huge natural jump, bold over fences, balanced super paces. Unfazed to hack, videos avail. No texts.
07889 155 251 lindsay_corrigan@hotmail.com



Horse

**16h 3ins &
Over**

Top Class Event

Height: 16.3hh
Age: 4yo
Price: £7,500
Location: Hants
Description: 4yo mare for pro/amateur Catherston Liberator x Faere Dazzler. Full brother CCI****, half sister Faere Dimaggio CCI****.
07970 285 781 annabruce101@icloud.com



**15h 3ins -
16h 2ins**

DRESSAGE FOALS

Height: 16.2hh **Age:** 2 months
Price: £POA
Description: Exceptional selection of foals by international dressage sires Franklin, Tolegro, Johnson, Sandro Hit, Sir Donnerhall and San Amour. Offers considered to competitive homes.
07507 585 287 www.fasidestud.com
horses@faside-estate.com



Hunter / All rounder ISH, Gelding

Height: 17hh **Age:** 9yo **Price:** £6,500
Description: This Boy is a pleasure to ride on the hunting field, he has hunted for 3 seasons with the AWH and Clifton on Teme, he had this season off due to owners circumstances. He has done RC activities. He is so easy to catch, he loads himself, falls asleep being clipped and having his teeth done, you can pressure wash him. He is up to date on vaccs, teeth, back. He has been in the same home for 5 years. 07971 064 563 nicolacdownes@gmail.com



Talented Grade B ISH

Height: 168cms **Age:** 9yo **Price:** £20,000
Description: Wehope: Cruising x Ballinakil Clover (Clover Hill/King of Diamonds) ISH, chestnut gelding. Well bred, eye-catching horse, fit and ready to compete. Straightforward, easy to do and a pleasure to own. Full siblings competed internationally. Consistently clear and placed in 120s and 130s. Horse being sold through no fault of his own, potential wasted with present owner.
00353 872 505 109
david@pelham.ie



16.3 Hh stunning liver chestnut mare

Height: 16 hands 3 ins
Age: 4 year old
Price: £2,500
Description: Reg Irish Sport Horse by Road To Happiness, dam Premier Broodmare by Big Sink Hope. ID X TB. 4 yrs. Top, show quality mare who moves and jumps. Shown county level as foal successfully. Lovely to handle. Ideal competition / show / hunter. No vices.
07778414739 (No texts please)



Top SJ/event

Height: 16 hands 2 ins **Age:** 9 year old **Price:** £10,500
Description: Stunning 16.2 9yo Dutch gelding. This horse is an absolute dream, he is unbeatable in a jump off and has over 900 points BS jumping up to fox. He is super careful and never stops. He has jumped all the big shows and can be seen at Hickstead this week. He is a beautiful mover, and was placed top 3 his only time dressage. He is awesome cross country and has a great gallop, he would make an awesome eventer. 100% in all respects. Great to hack not spooky at all, young riders dream. For sale on behalf of owners but was imported by me as a 4yo. 5 star home only very sad sale. 07907086179

Horse

To advertise in *Horse magazine*
Classified or Horses
for sale sections call **01689 869893**



A Talented Gent

Height: 16.1hh **Age:** 5yo **Price:** £12,000 negotiable
Description: Extravagant moving horse oozes presence with 3 magnificent paces, superb trainable temperament. Serious prospect to reach the top. Consistently scoring 69% + BD novice, always placed. Has competed BSJA with a bold scopey jump. Has XC schooled and hunted proving brave but sensible. 100% in every way on or off the ground. No vices, open to any vetting. Exceptional breeding lines. Email or leave voicemail. 5*home. 01743 296 255 kteirish@hotmail.co.uk



Black Angel brother of Blue Angel

Height: 16 hands **Age:** 8 year old
Price: £8,000 or nearest offer **Location:** Surrey
Description: 8 year old 16h dark bay gelding. Brother to Blue Angel, winner of many international grand Prix's, one of the highest ranked mares in the world. Son of unbelievable Darco, who has Olympic pedigree. A rare opportunity to be able to buy this incredible blood line. This talented horse is well schooled, has plenty of scope. Jumping newcomers and ready to conquer the circuit. 01883 742459 / 07970 683076



Just over from Ireland

Height: 16 hands 2 ins **Age:** 9 year old
Price: £10,000
Description: 16.2 dapple grey 9yrs RID Gelding. Qualified for RID champs, being sold with the ride. A fine, upstanding horse, with superb confirmation and paces. Goes well in snaffle or double bridle. 07878673624



Outstanding 2yr old Colt

Height: 16.2hh **Age:** 2yo **Price:** £5,000 OVNO
Description: Longacres Snow Patrol, He is the most stunning horse, combining amazing movement with a fantastic temperament. He is true stallion potential and will without a doubt go on to make a top competition horse. He stands at the moment 16.2hh. He is out of our amazing KWPN mare Trendy, who is by Equador/Voltaire The combination already have some youngsters out competing BD and young event horse classes having great success. 07787 547 682 mandy@longacresstud.co.uk



Showjumper / Eventer

Height: 16.1hh **Age:** 5 **Price:** £POA
Description: Irish sport horse, bay mare, by Sunny Boy (KWPN) out of a Lux Z/Clover Hill mare. Trainable intelligent brain, snaffle mouth, fast reactions, proving to be ultra careful & bold. Has got enough scope to train on to 1.30m & beyond. Done 5 shows double clear every time. Ready to register. Athletic modern type of sports horse, suited to ambitious rider. Kind & easy to manage. Has no vices & hacks out. Lightly XC schooled very well, so could also event. **Contact Di: 07830 117 703 for video and pictures on Facebook faircloughd7@aol.com**



Super Quality Filly

Height: 16.2hh **Age:** 2 months **Price:** £3,000
Description: This amazing filly by Samara Fly (Sambertino) out of our stunning mare Longacres Expense Eve (Diddicoy) is sure to make a top competition horse. She has amazing movement & presence not often seen in a filly; also could be a very successful show horse. Totally correct in every way. Her dam, herself has an amazing competition record, Competed successfully, Showing, sidesaddle, eventing. This filly has full studbook Pink papers £3,000 £500 deposit secures till weaning. 07787 547 682 mandy@longacresstud.co.uk



Fantastic event mare with huge potential!

Height: 15.3hh **Age:** 8yo **Price:** £7,500
Description: An incredibly talented mare by Louella Inshallah III. Inshallah is a Reg SHB GB, TB x Hanovarian mare, with a big scopey jump and 98 BD points. She is a bold, brave jumper, clearing 1m with ease showing huge talent to jump bigger. Competed at 2015 BD winter regionals in Novice open scoring 65%, she constantly scores 65%+ with ease. She is very safe to hack & has no vices, XC schooling; water, ditches etc. Good to shoe, clip, & box. Sad sale due to time constraints. 5* home required for this talented mare to reach her full potential. 07544 397 576 Torfenwickdressage@hotmail.co.uk



Endless Scope & talent

Height: 16.2hh
Age: 9yo
Price: £18,000 ONO
Description: Straight forward ride, with careful and talented jump. Jumping 1.25m/1.30m with scope to burn. Children on horses/grand prix prospect. 07797 825 211 emmapallot@gmail.com

Exciting Prospect Quality Young Event Horse

Height: 16.2 hands
Age: 6 years
Price: POA
Location: Shropshire, Whitchurch
Description: Very good looking bay mare by Colin Diamond, out of a Clover Hill mare. 07932625509



Competition home wanted

Height: 16 hands 1 in **Price:** £2,750 ono
Description: For pretty 16.1 hh wellbred KWPN mare. Loves showjumping BS winnings. also been placed XC and done funrides. Sadly for sale due to loss of competition rider. Well mannered on the ground and under the saddle. Could suit teenager moving onto horses. Good to catch, shoe, box, etc. 5* home only. 07917108367 or evenings 01249 892878

SJ Allrounder

Height: 16 hands 1 in
Age: 5 year old **Price:** £5,500
Location: To be seen near Gatwick
Description: 16.1hh handsome Connemara X Dapple Grey Gelding 5ys. BA super young horse who has been brought on slowly. Just started competed at Novice. Very bold sensible attitude. Make super PC, RC Allrounder. Good in traffic box shoe and clip. Lovely temperament. 07770759811



TB x Cob

Height: 15.3hh
Age: 6yo
Price: £4,000 ono
Description: Coloured mare has competed DR SJ hunted, attended PC Camp and XC schooled. Full vaccs. Good to box, shoe and clip. Bold mare not a novice ride but completely unspoilt with snaffle mouth. 01457 870904 or 07977 310811



Horse INFO

Where to buy it

Seen something you like in this issue? Whether you're after a new bit, clothing or grooming products, we've got the contacts you need

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Aloeride: (01858) 464 550; www.aloeride.co.uk

Back on Track: www.backontrack-uk.co.uk

Barrier Animal Health:
www.barrier-biotech.com; tel: (01953) 456 363

Battles: www.battles.co.uk

Carrots: www.carrotsequestrian.co.uk;
tel: (01245) 445 362

Carr & Day & Martin:
www.carrdaymartin.com;

Champion: www.championhats.co.uk;
tel: (0113) 270 7000

Dodson & Horrell:
www.dodsonandhorrell.com

Dressage Deluxe: www.dressagedeluxe.com;
tel: 0800 321 3001

EHL Products: (0161) 480 7902;
www.ehl-ingredients.co.uk

Equine Answers: www.equineanswers.co.uk;
tel: (01388) 420 222.

Equimins: www.equimins-online.com

Equiplus: www.equiplus.co.uk

FMBs: www.FMBs.co.uk; (01494) 883 433

Fearns Farm: www.fearnsfarm.co.uk;
tel: (01704) 821 119

Fly Away: www.flyaway.ltd.uk

Golly Galoshes: www.gollygaloshes.com

Grub's: (01279) 418 052; www.work-lite.com

Horseware: www.horseware.com

Neue Schule: www.nsbits.com; 0844 6644 600

NAF: www.naf-equine.eu

Nedz: www.nedz.co.uk; (01254) 677 762

Nettex: (01634) 257 150;
www.nettexequine.com

Robinson Animal Healthcare:
www.robinsonhealthcare.com/Animal-Healthcare

Safe-Care Equine: (01294) 832 529;
www.saracenhorsefeeds.com;

Schoffel: www.schoffel.co.uk

Shadow Horse: (01628) 302 301;
www.shadowhorse.co.uk

Shires: (01568) 613 600;
www.shiresequestrian.com

Renapur: www.renapur.com;
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Supreme Products: (01377) 2299 050;
www.supremeproducts.co.uk;

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Vale Brothers: www.valebrothers.co.uk

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Polo Boots P10

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"I wish he was 10 years younger"

Heidi Bull says Carrot, her dressage schoolmaster, is one in a million

Photo: Ken Ettridge Photography

VITAL STATISTICS



Name: Arlekin TS (Carrot)

Age: 20 years

Height: 16.2hh

Breed: Oldenburg

Owned by:

Heidi Bull

Likes: Eating, especially milk thistle.

Dislikes: The dentist's latex gloves and trains.

"I bought Carrot in May 2012," recalls Heidi Bull. "He was the first horse I tried and I fell in love immediately."

"He arrived on my wedding anniversary and turned out to be the best purchase I have ever made."

"When I got him, he was aged 17 and already an Advanced-level dressage horse. He'd been with the same lady for 18 months, but she didn't compete him or do much with him."

"I'd owned some tricky young horses and had suffered falls, due to their unpredictable natures. This time, I wanted something that had been there, done it and got the T-shirt. I was also after a horse to teach me higher-level dressage movements as I hadn't competed above Elementary at that point."

"Carrot had competed at Prix St Georges level, so I had to downgrade him to do the lower levels. I did a Novice test on him, then some Elementaries and Mediums, with good results."

Dressage divas

"In 2013, we finished fourth at the Medium Open Petplan Area Festival at Myerscough College, Lancs. This was extra special because Carrot had been lame and I was thrilled he was sound again."

"Last year, I got to wear my tail coat for the first time in my life at Advanced

"Carrot is completely spoilt and will stay with me for the rest of his days"

level. I also competed in an Advanced Medium to music class and we were third with 66.17 per cent!

"After his lameness, Carrot came back better than ever, receiving lovely comments from the judges."

"I have lessons with dressage trainer and rider Harry Payne, and Carrot loves to show off his canter pirouettes."

"I worry I should be taking it easier with my horse now, due to his age, and I'm not sure how much more I will do with him dressage wise. However, he feels good and is not feeling his age yet."

"My trainer, Harry, believes that the quickest way to make an old horse look old is to stop working him, and I think there's a lot of truth in that."

Showing success

"This year, I have done some in-hand veteran showing classes with Carrot. I plan to do ridden classes too, but I need to sort my tack out as I only have black dressage gear for him at the moment."

"I am trying to qualify for Olympia, but we will see. In his first outing, Carrot won his class and in our next attempt at Cheshire County Show he was second. You need to be champion at a second round to qualify."

"I am also planning to enter Carrot for the Equifest 15 Plus Championship in August."

"At one show, the judge said she was very impressed with his freedom of movement, which was a lovely thing to hear, considering his age."

A happy chap

"Carrot has so much character and everyone loves him. If I could clone him, I'm sure I would be a millionaire."

"As he's so wise, he can be cheeky and sometimes he uses his wise ways against me. This keeps me on my toes and means I have to ride him properly to get results. He doesn't let me off lightly."

"I call him my Wonky Donkey because he has a dip in his head, possibly caused by an old injury."

"As with all my horses (I have eight in total), I like Carrot to live life as a horse. He goes out in the field, I hack him out and if he does have to stay in for any reason, I'll graze him in-hand."

"Carrot is completely spoilt and will stay with me for the rest of his days. I can't imagine life without him."

"Every rider should have a Carrot in their life. He makes me smile every day and loves to be fussed and cuddled."

Next month in Horse

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27 August

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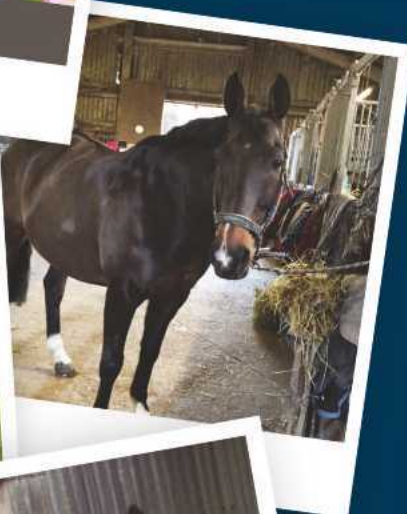
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